

505 R.C.T. WWII

Regimental Combat Team



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Darby Lake
Stanton, Michigan 48888-9122

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The Panther

#1

April 2009



CENTRAL EUROPE

REGISTRATION FORM
2009 REUNION
505 RCT ASSOCIATION
(And Family & Friends of the 505 RCT Association)

August 27 - 30, 2009
Fort Lewis, WA

Registration Fee: \$85.00 per Person

Checks only, payable to F&F 505 RCT Association, mailed with
Registration Form, to Ellen Peters, 3630 Townsend Dr., Dallas TX 75229-
3805.

Name (s): _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

E-Mail: _____

Unit/Affiliation: _____

No. of Attendees: _____

Arrival Date: _____ Departure Date: _____

Special Need (handicap accessibility, wheelchair, etc.): _____

Emergency Contact: _____

Hotel: Courtyard Marriott 800-321-2211 or 253-529-0200. Be sure and tell them you are part of the "Family and Friends of the 505 RCT Reunion Group". To receive the discounted rate of \$108.00 a night, you must reserve your room by August 6, 2008. The hotel has an airport shuttle service. Once you have picked up your bags, call the hotel and let them know to send the shuttle.

REGISTRATION FEES WILL BE REUNDED IN FULL IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND.

COAT OF ARMS AND DISTINCTIVE INSIGNIA
FOR WWII VETERANS
505TH PARACHUTE INFANTRY REGIMENT (RCT)

1. The Blazonry and description are as follows:

SHIELD: On a silver background outlined in Infantry Blue is a black-winged panther salient, inverted proper, leaping through a yellow bolt of lightning. Four deployed parachutes form a background.

CREST: A silver canopy is an essential element in a parachutist's equipment in making a vertical descent into enemy territory.

MOTTO: H-Minus

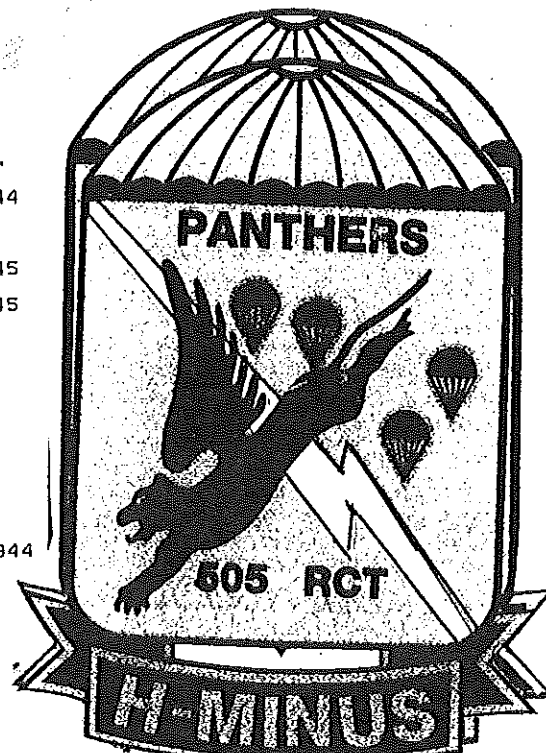
In World War II, the 505th was named the "Panthers." The black panther symbolizes stealth, speed, and courage--all characteristics of a well-trained and highly motivated Airborne soldier. The wings are added to represent entry into combat via air. The four parachutes symbolize the four parachute drops into combat during World War II. The bolt of lightning depicts a powerful, fearless, and disruptive force. The six bronze stars enumerate the six major campaigns participated in during World War II in the European theatre. The bronze arrowhead is for invasion into foreign territory. The motto, "H-Minus," is military terminology, as "D-Day" is the date, "H-Hour" is the time of attack. "H-Minus" indicates the period of time the Airborne soldier enters combat prior to the attack time of conventional forces. "H-Minus" is in silver letters on a blue background. The Infantry Blue border outlining the shield measures 1/8 inch around.

505th PARACHUTE INFANTRY REGIMENTAL CAMPAIGNS
REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM WORLD WAR II

SICILY	9 Jul-17 Aug 1943
ITALY Naples-Foggia	13 Sep-43 21 Jan 1944
FRANCE Normandy (W/Arrow-head)	6 Jun-24 Jul 1944
HOLLAND Rhineland (W/Arrow-head)	17 Sep-44 21 Mar 1945
BELGIUM Ardennes-Alsace	16 Dec-44 25 Jan 1945
GERMANY Central Europe	22 Mar-11 May 1945

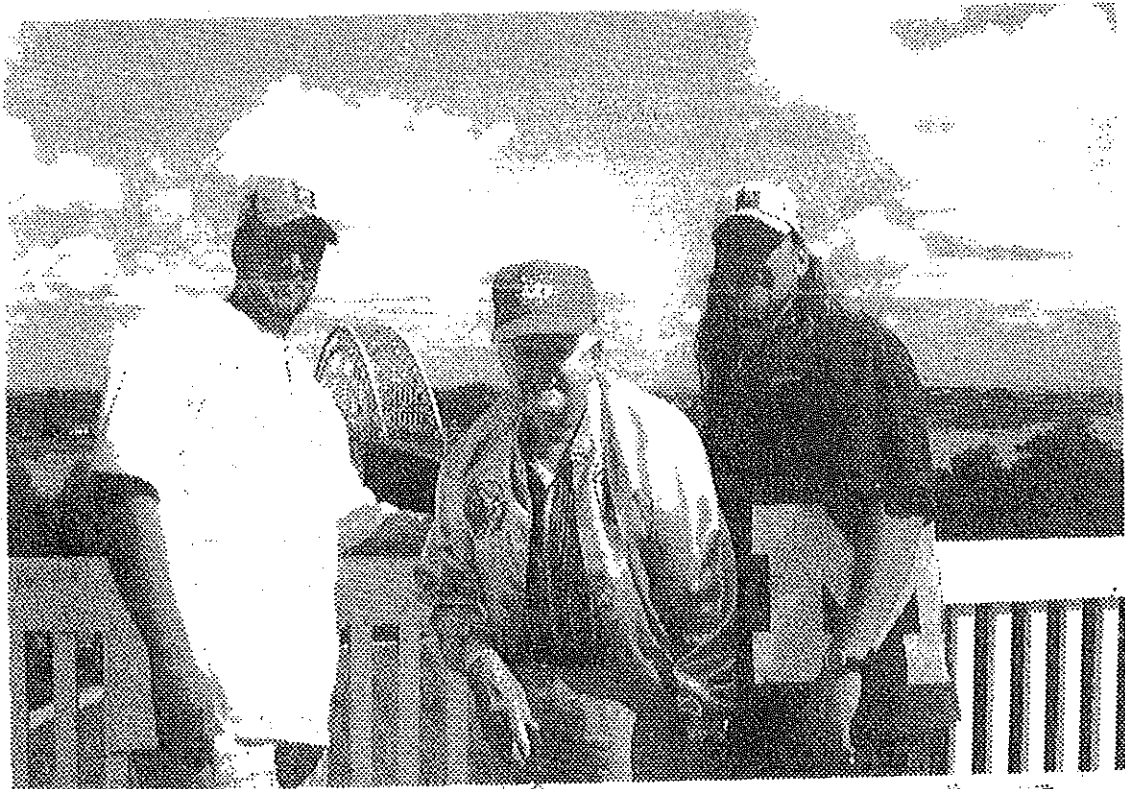
DECORATIONS

Presidential Unit Citation	Ste Mere Eglise	6-9 Jun 1944
Presidential Unit Citation	Nijmegen	19-20 Sep 1944
French Croix DeGuerre with Palm	Ste Mere Eglise	6 Jun 1944
French Croix DeGuerre with Palm	Cotentin	6-20 Jun 1944
Military Order of William	Nijmegen	17 Sep- 4 Oct 1944
French Fourragere		5-6 Jun 1944
Netherlands Orange Lanyard		17 Sept- 4 Oct 1944
Belgian Fourragere		17 Dec-1944 23 Jan 1945





Research shows that Charlie Brown lived in Seattle and Franz Steigler had moved to Vancouver BC after the war. When they finally met, they discovered they had lived less than 200 miles apart for the past 50 years!

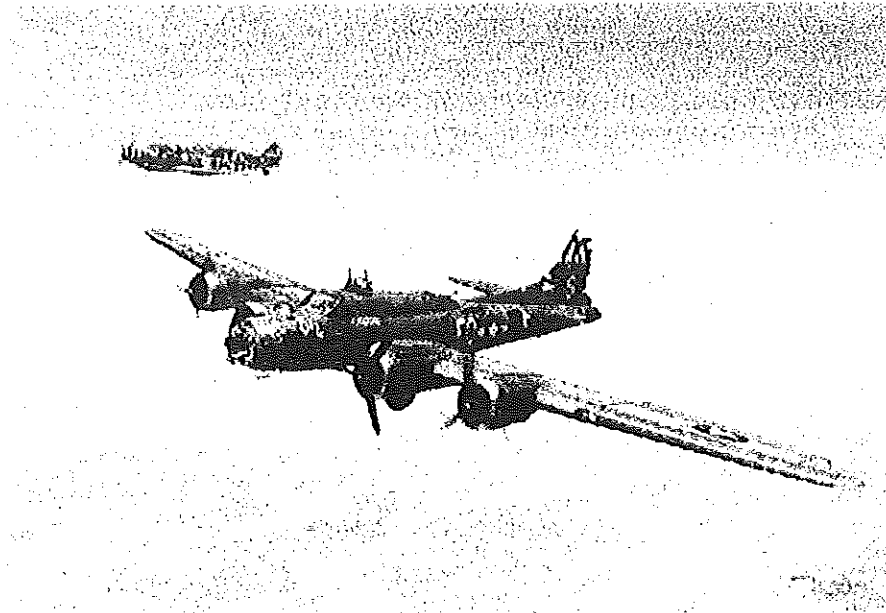


PP McKeage GRAND SONS Todd + Tyson
WALL RIVER BRIDGE NISMEGEN

True according to snopes.

Quite A Story Of A B17

Look carefully at the B-17 and note how shot up it is - one engine dead, tail, horizontal stabilizer and nose shot up. It was ready to fall out of the sky. Then realize that there is a German ME-109 fighter flying next to it. Now read the story below. I think you'll be surprised.



Charlie Brown was a B-17 Flying Fortress pilot with the 379th Bomber Group at Kimbolton, England. His B-17 was called 'Ye Old Pub' and was in a terrible state, having been hit by flak and fighters. The compass was damaged and they were flying deeper over enemy territory instead of heading home to Kimbolton.

After flying over an enemy airfield, a German pilot named Franz Steigler was ordered to take off and shoot down the B-17. When he got near the B-17, he could not believe his eyes. In his words, he 'had never seen a plane in such a bad state'. The tail and rear section was severely damaged, and the tail gunner wounded. The top gunner was all over the top of the fuselage! The nose was smashed and there were holes everywhere.

Despite having ammunition, Franz flew to the side of the B-17 and looked at Charlie Brown, the pilot. Brown was scared and struggling to control his damaged and blood-stained plane.

Aware that they had no idea where they were going, Franz waved at Charlie to turn 180 degrees. Franz escorted and guided the stricken plane to, and slightly over, the North Sea towards England. He then saluted Charlie Brown and turned away, back to Europe.

When Franz landed he told the CO that the plane had been shot down over the sea, and never told the truth to anybody. Charlie Brown and the remains of his crew told all at their briefing, but were ordered never to talk about it.

More than 40 years later, Charlie Brown wanted to find the Luftwaffe pilot who saved the crew. After years of research, Franz was found. He had never talked about the incident, not even at post-war reunions.

They met in the USA at a 379th Bomber Group reunion, together with 25 people who are alive now - all because Franz never fired his guns that day.

BOB BURNS

Friends: I recieved a letter today from Phyllis Palmieri, that her father, Robert Atkinson, passed away Dec. 23, 2008 at the age of 86. Bob Atkinson was an "oldtimer" with C battery (Anti-Tank) of the 80th Airborne AA BN of the 82nd Airborne.

After finalizing basic training as part of the 5th Antiaircraft Training Battalion at Fort Eustis, Va, he was one of 11 from that outfit to be shipped to the 82nd Airborne at Fort Bragg in late March, 1943 to replace cadre who would not be going overseas in May. (My own father, Edward Burns, was one of the 11 and placed in D Battery (AA).

Bob was an ardent supporter of the 82nd Assn and the 80th AA Reunions. For 65 years he remained a lifelong friend of his batterymate, Bob Fields of Pittsburgh. They attended the 505 Reunion in Bragg in 2006

Like many veterans, he thought himself lucky to survive the war by the Grace of God. Loaded for Sicily, his glider mission was cancelled on D+2 because of the friendly fire incident over Gela and the loss of dozens of British gliders which landed in the ocean and crashed all shot up on the Sicilian terrain and mountain passes.

In Italy, his glider Mission to support the paratroopers in the capture of Rome was cancelled when the Mission was aborted on the eve of the Invasion of Italy--a certain death trap.

Instead, his unit landed at Salerno weeks after the beachhead was secured and he went to Naples as a troop of occupation and was "lucky" to only have to put up with bombing raids. He landed in Normandy at 2100 hours in a British Horsas glider with his .57MM gun, crew and jeep. The Horsas were large, plywood death traps that were too big and fragile for hedgerows. His serial, scheduled for Landing Zone W near Les Forges, came in on time and landed on target, under heavy German AA and automatic weapons fire, all while the 82nd and Edson Raff's Task Force tried everything possible with smoke and flares to divert the gliders from this killing zone. Still, Atkinson and his gun squad emerged from one of the less than 10 Horsas which did not break apart to see others hitting treetops and breaking apart, men and equipment falling to certain injury and death. He was among the .57MM guns that made it to defend Ste Mere Eglise and later on JUNE 16, 1944 was assigned to the 2nd BN 505.

LTC Vandevort ordered his gun section (2, .57 MM guns) into Ste Saveur Le Vicomte to support E company which was bogged down in the town facing German armor and artillery in a rear guard action. the jeeps towed their gun to different locations. One became famous as Robert Cappa photographed it for Life Magazine after it had been knocked out by a mortar barrage, trying to KO a German tank at the other end of the street. Three mates

were killed instantly, 5 more seriously wounded, one dying inside of 48 hours.

Fortunately, Bob was on the "other" gun crew which made it back to England.

He made his second glider ride into Holland on Sept 23, this time in the American CG4-A WACO. Inside of 5 days, he was in a foxhole in the town of Erlecom when Pvt Ray Fary awakened him that a German Mark IV tank had approached from the woodline with infantry support. It was less than 100 yards away. He, Ray and CPL Boteler ran to the AT gun, turned it in the direction of the oncoming tank, loaded and fired at it only 65 yards away. The projectile hit the drive sprocket wheel and stopped the tank. The infantry backed away and the gun crew took up firing positions. To this day, no one can explain why the tank ignored the gun crew and why it fired its MGs in another direction. At such a distance, a German tank would have had no trouble destroying an 80th AA gun crew--as others had done that morning.

But Bob survived to face the Battle of the Bulge where his crew found itself with the 504 in Rahier, defending the 504 against Kampfgruppe Peiper. The 504 caught hell taking Cheneux, but in doing so, it stopped any armored attempt in that sector. His crew could just have easily have been in Trois Ponts with the 505 where 4 AT gun crew members were KIA and 3 others seriously wounded in a tank attack.

In her letter, Mrs Palmieri wrote..."He was a fighter and fought to the very end but his damaged heart could not carry onward. He loved the 80th AA and the 82nd Airborne. His fellow soldiers were never far from his thoughts...I promised him I would not let him be forgotten... Our nation is losing its greatest generation at an alarming rate...It will be left to sons, daughters and grandchildren to carry forward their sacrifice and service into the future."

Robert Atkinson's story is not unlike many others...but is one I happen to know and unique enough to share with all of you, who will be left to tell similar stories.

Bob

Subject: TAPS-PFC Robert Atkinson, Hartsville, SC

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dwmdrby

From: <rjburns19@aol.com>
To: <dwmdrby@charter.net>
Sent: Monday, March 23, 2009 12:53 PM
Subject: Re: Reunion Details

Don: We will be flying into Seattle-Tacoma (Sea-Tac) International Airport. Flight, non-stop from NY are about \$350. WE will arrange shuttles =from the hotel for pic-up service very half hour.
Bob

-----Original Message-----

From: dwmdrby <dwmdrby@charter.net>
To: rjburns19@aol.com
Sent: Mon, 23 Mar 2009 6:30 pm
Subject: Fw: Reunion Details

Bob :March 22,09 What is the name of the Airport we are flying into, close to Hotel
??????-----0-

----- Original Message -----

From: dwmdrby
To: rjburns19@aol.com
Sent: Saturday, March 14, 2009 9:32 AM
Subject: Reunion Details

Dear Bob: How is the details on Reunion 09 coming along. We need amount for registration. telephone # for Hotel rooms. 27-29 does that cover a day early and or after reunion on pricing. Instructions on Airport. I haven't answered you on details. what ever you decide, I am with you. Barbara is flying home for a vacation before Reunion, and will be flying with me to washington. On sunday for flying home, she will fly to Georgia and I will fly to Michigan. I am really planning to see a good turn out for this reunion. You are doing a great job, thanks much. don McKeage Prez 505 RCT

Job Hunting? Start with the companies that posted job openings this week.

I AM SENDING YOU ALL THIS SAD INFO BECAUSE JIM WAS A GREAT TROOPER, AND FINALLY MADE HIS LAST JUMP, I AM SORRY TO GET THE NEWS FROM GERRI, AND I AM WONDERING IF ANY OF YOU KNEW JIM---I KNEW HIM WELL AND AM VERY SAD OVER HIS PASSING, HE WAS A LOT OF FUN AND LIVED NEAR GERRI AND WAS A BIG HELP TO HER AFTER HER HUSBAND BOB , A PP OF THE ASSOCIATION, PASSED ON, AND FOR MANY YEARS WAS A MUTUAL FRIEND, ALWAYS ATTENDING THE ANNUAL ASSOC. REUNIONS ETC. ETC.-----REGARDLESS, SEND HIS WIDOW A CONDOLENCE CARD PLEASE--GOD BLESS ALL OF US WHO ARE STILL AMONG THE LIVING, BECAUSE THE GOOD LORD THINKS THAT THIS IS BEST FOR US FOR NOW, AIRBORNE

*Jim Beach's address is:
6490 Royal Manor Circle
Delray Beach, FL. 33484-1915*

Her name is Janice

*Jumped with The 503
Sicily 1ST night. He was
504*

Don McKeage, Bob B. and Jim B.,

Francine has arranged for a memorial mass for Bill Tucker to be held in the church at Ste Mere Eglise on June 6th at 0930. It is open to all of Bill's friends, and his daughters, Karen and Sandy, will be there. Rich Becker and I will be among those speaking about Bill, who was a loyal member of the 505. If possible, I think that there should be a notice of this in the next Panther.

My thanks to you all.

Barbara

ALCON,

President Steve has asked me to pass this information along to you.

As some of you are aware Manny went back into Womack Hospital last night unable to breathe again. As of this morning he was doing better although easily exhausted.

However, we were recently notified that he is currently being transported to Chapel Hill for more treatment and further consultation. The Doctors have not yet told him what he needs to have done but have hinted at surgery. We will keep you informed as we learn more.

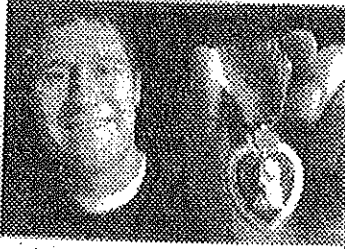
Please keep both he and Maggie in your prayers. She is doing well but cannot drive yet and really unable to do too much. Also note that at this time we ask that you keep this information on a need to know basis so as to not cause undo panick and/or flood the De Jesus family with well meaning but overwhelming phone calls, etc.

Purple Heart recipient shares his story

By
Staff Writer

Published: Friday, February 20, 2009 at 4:54 p.m.
Last Modified: Friday, February 20, 2009 at 7:23 p.m.

Zachary Carpino and fellow soldiers were playing cards in an abandoned school in Baquba, Iraq, when machine gun fire erupted over their heads.



Carpino, a member of an 82nd Airborne reconnaissance unit from Fort Bragg, ran to his room to retrieve body armor and weapons when the first of two explosions threw him against the wall. Two suicide bombers driving trucks had detonated their deadly cargo next to the school that served as the unit's living quarters, and the second bomb caused part of the building to collapse.

When Carpino ran to the edge of the broken building, he saw another soldier's hand moving in the rubble. Under fire from machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades, he and another infantryman climbed down the debris to uncover the buried soldier and carry him to safety.

"You do what you have to do to stay alive and to keep your friends around you alive," Carpino said.

Wilmington resident Zachary Carpino holds the Purple Heart he received Wednesday, February 18, 2009. Carpino was an Army Specialist with the 82nd Airborne in Baquba, Iraq, when the abandoned schoolhouse his unit was living in was attacked by insurgents.

Staff Photo By Matt Born

The 25-year-old former Army specialist suffered shrapnel wounds, an injured shoulder, lacerations on his arm and minor burns in the attack. And although he was awarded the Bronze Star while in Iraq, he didn't receive his Purple Heart until this month. He finally received the honor at American Legion Post No. 10 in Wilmington on Feb. 7 after Bob Angeli of the N.C. Division of Veteran Affairs, also a Post 10 member, helped him.

"The application went up to the approving authorities, but somewhere along the line the medical documentation got lost and had to be resubmitted," Angeli said.

Related Links:

On Saturday, Carpino will talk about his experiences in Iraq with the Purple Heart breakfast group at 9:30 a.m. at the Courtyard by Marriott, 151 Van Campen Blvd. The meeting is open to all veterans who have been wounded in combat and awarded the Purple Heart.

Originally from Colorado, Carpino joined the Army four years ago.

"I saw the situation in Iraq getting worse. I figured I'd volunteer and make it better," he said.

After being stationed at Fort Bragg, Carpino spent 15 months in Iraq. His work there included going out with groups of infantrymen at night and hiding in palm groves or abandoned homes, trying to catch insurgents in the act of planting roadside bombs.

"Then if we caught them, we'd attack them," he said.

After the April 23 attack, Carpino said the unit gathered intelligence and cracked down on the network involved but never caught the actual attackers.

"They all slipped away except for the two suicide bombers," he said.

Carpino said he and fellow soldiers also provided humanitarian aid to Iraqi civilians, including medical care, blankets in winter and school supplies.

"That's the rewarding part," he said. He said Iraqi civilians don't like terrorists. "Most of the guys we're fighting aren't even from Iraq. They come from Iran, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Chechnya."

After his contract with the Army ended last year, Carpino moved to Wilmington. He is finishing online courses toward a degree in criminal justice, in the hopes of eventually working for a federal agency such as the FBI, and adjusting to civilian life.

"Any time you go to a war zone, you definitely think about life in a different manner," Carpino said.

A Beauty Queen in Combat Boots

Afghanistan War vet Jill Stevens brought a fresh twist to the 2008 Miss America Pageant.

By Janie Blankenship

One look at Miss Utah Jill Stevens in her glamorous black evening gown and heels and it's hard to picture her in anything else. But for Sgt. Jill Stevens of the Utah National Guard, she's more comfortable in combat boots and BDUs.

On Jan. 26, Stevens competed in the Miss America Pageant in Las Vegas, becoming the first war veteran in the pageant's history.

Stevens made it to the final 16 and was named "America's Choice," based on voting via text messages in the days leading up to the pageant. She was cut in the second round, but took it in stride as she dropped on stage and began doing push-ups before waving goodbye.

"You don't typically see a beauty queen in combat boots," Utah National Guard spokesman Maj. Hank McIntire told Salt Lake City's *Deseret Morning News*. He added that Stevens is a good role model for young women who might not otherwise have considered joining the Guard.

Stevens joined the Guard six months before the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. In November 2003, she learned she was going to Afghanistan. Stevens served with the 1st Bn., 211th Avn. Regt., in Afghanistan from 2004-05 at Bagram Air Base, where she worked as a medic.

One of her best experiences while in Afghanistan was working with the children in the villages. She took a liking to a cross-eyed five-year-old girl named Halima. Stevens and her fellow soldiers asked U.S. doctors to fix her eyes.

The week of the surgery, Stevens spent a lot of time with Halima. "We'll see a difference in Afghanistan when these kids grow into adults," Stevens told *Soldiers* magazine. "They will make it happen when they're older, and I think Halima will be a part of that."

Five months passed after the little girl's surgery before Stevens was able to



Sgt. Jill Stevens, Miss Utah

return to the village to see her.

"Halima came running straight for me, arms wide open with the biggest grin on her face," Stevens said. "That right there was truly the happiest moment of my life. I didn't care that I had to give up so many things to be there. It made every sacrifice worth it."

'I Don't Do Heels'

When Stevens, or "Smiles" as she is known by her fellow Guardsmen, returned home, she started nursing school at Southern Utah University. She graduated with honors in May 2007.

While there, she was encouraged to enter the Miss Southern Utah University pageant. A pageant was not something this vet was interested in.

"I was like, 'Yeah right.' I wear combat boots, I don't do heels," she told *Soldiers* magazine. "To me, pageants were about girls waving their hands and looking pretty."

But after a little research, she realized how winners usually move people to action. She tried out and won the pageant and later became second runner-up in the 2006 Miss Utah pageant. In June 2007, she tried again and unanimously

Name: Sgt. Jill Stevens
Age: 24
Service: Army National Guard
Married: No

won the state title.

Since then, it's been a whirlwind of a ride, but Stevens says she has enjoyed every minute of it. This includes being sequestered in a mansion for a week with all contestants to film a reality series that appeared on *The Learning Channel* in January.

Her judgment in clothing choices raised the eyebrows of the judges and some fellow participants. In competition, she refused to wear a two-piece swimsuit.

"I don't want to showcase my body in a way that makes me an object," she told *Soldiers* magazine before the pageant. "Again, I want to be myself, not just a part of the mold."

In keeping with that sentiment, Stevens' slogan is "Lock and Load." This translates well to her platform issue: *Ready When Disaster Strikes—Emergency Preparedness for Everyone*.

"I've never seen anyone with more natural poise or with such a gift for connecting with people," Sharlene Wells-Hawkes, 1985 Miss America, told *Soldiers* magazine. "She's a natural leader."

With just a little more than a year left in the National Guard, Stevens submitted her application to become a commissioned Army officer. On a visit to Walter Reed Army Medical Center last October, Stevens said she wants to work there.

"If I can help soldiers—my battle buddies—that means a lot," Stevens told *GX* magazine.

Stevens may not have taken the crown at the Miss America Pageant, but in the hearts of veterans everywhere, she's already a winner. ❊

E-mail: jblankenship@vfw.org

Date: Monday, January 12, 2009, 6:26 PM

Services for my Dad, John W. Clancy will be as follows:

Visitation will be on Wednesday 6-8 PM with a rosary service starting at 5:30 PM, Green Acres Mortuary (Chapel), 401 N. Hayden Rd., Scottsdale, AZ. (North east corner of McKellips and Hayden Rd.). Services will be on Thursday, January 15, 2009, 10:00 AM, Holy Cross Catholic Church, 1244 S. Power Rd., Mesa, AZ (take the 60 to Power Rd exit, turn north [left], Church is just north of Superstition Mall on west side of street (left)).

In lieu of flowers Contributions can be made in Dad's name to: St. Mary Magdalene Catholic Church, "Building Fund" (please make sure that is noted on the donation) PO Box 849, Higley, AZ 85236. My Dad was so worried he'd never get a chance to see the church built, we have been having Mass in a school gym for several years now. He so wanted to see the church built, this was one of his last wishes. I know this would greatly please him.

Much Love to all,
Colleen Clancy-Smith and Family

Begin forwarded message:

From: Colleen <[redacted]>
Date: January 11, 2009 4:03:27 PM GMT-07:00

Subject: John Clancy

Today, at 2:46 PM, my beloved father, John W. Clancy, 86, passed away after suffering with COPD. His lungs just couldn't hold on. His heart and kidneys were working pretty good. He didn't want to be kept a live with the ventilator. Dad spent 40 + years with Motorola, started with Galvin Manufacturing after the war which as we all know became Motorola. He was a very PROUD WWII Vet, he was in the 82nd Airborne Division, 505 paratroop infantry, Company B. He jumped into all major campaigns in Europe and saved many lives as a Medic. He was one tough Irishman, all the way to the end. He was a very very proud man.

More to come on serves.

Thank you all for your prayers and concerns.

Colleen

Subject: Re: battle of the bulge

Hello Jim. I have traveled through the area in 2001 before going to Normandy. One of the interesting things is that Bastogne does get a lot of notice and rightfully so however you are right in that there were many many other places of severe battle. The terrain of advance for the 6th SS Panzer army and Peipers Regiment were much more difficult due to the much more high hilly terrain. In fact the hills in that area could almost be called low mountains with few roads. Yet Peiper out ran his own follow on elements and was eventually stopped due to running out of gas and other essential supplies. Air drops failed in most cases to fall within his lines. Also it was the only time in the ETO that the 2nd Infantry division, and the only time in history that the 82nd and the 508 retreated. The 6th SS Panzer Army was still a very powerful fighting force in spite of losses in Normandy.

Anyone who had to fight them knew just how hard fighters they were.

One of the reasons that the 5th Panzer Army go farther is the fact that the commander Hasso Von Mauntaufoell was considered the 3rd greatest panzer general in the German Army next to Rommel and Guderian. He also decided not to use an artillery preparation and instead sent his troops forward so that they in may case were behind the American lines before anyone knew it. When they realized Bastgone was already occupied by the Americans they due to the terrain simply bypassed the town in the fields around the town and kept going leaving the 26th Volksgrenader division to surround and take the town.

The force was not really large enough to do so, but came close as we know more than once.

The whole German offensive hinged on getting across the Meuse river in 2-4 days. By the time the 2nd Panzer division got close to the river it was about 11 days later and by then the Allies had reinforced and were too strong to be breached and the Germans were running out of gas. However people should never forget that almost 20 Thousand Americans died in Battle of the Bulge in 6 weeks and over 500,000 Americans eventually were in the battle.

My father told me that they combed units in the USA and sent men overseas due to the fear of the German advance.

SUCH A BATTLE SHOULD NEVER BE FORGOTTEN AND NO MATTER WERE ONE FOUGHT AGAINST THE GERMANS IT WAS IMPORTANT!!!

Thank God for our Greatest Generation. We own them so much. Gene Garren

Gene: Well said and well written. Each of these veterans are gem stones. For every one that passes away, the remaining are all the more precious to us. I believe those of us who are truly saddened to hear of the loss of such men see each of them representing something noble in a generation that is passing. And while time and progress, as we call it, gives us eternal hope, we mourn and fear that these men take something with them that we may not see again in our country. Hopefully, they have passed on just enough of that special something they had--to men such as yourself-- that makes us proud to call ourselves Americans.

Bob BURRIS

**Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, the creator of all things,
and the giver of all good gifts and graces. Surround us with your
watchcare, love and protection. We thank you for your many
rich blessings.**

**Forbid that we should look upon your works and give no
thoughts to you as the Creator.**

**May we not be so confused by the things of the world that
we fail to hear your voice.**

**Give us the grace to recognize you and listen to what you
say.**

**As we are gathered in the silence of our heart may we
recall the memory of those we knew whose lives were sacrificed.
May they rest in your loving care and may we never forget them
and may the world never forget them. We owe them a debt that
we can never repay, but we can remember that their sacrifice
was not in vain. Our nation remains free. We thank them.**

**We pray for your continued blessings on the United States
of America, on our leaders, and for those who proudly wear the
uniform of America. Keep them safe from harms way. May our
hearts always be humbled in deep gratitude for the privilege we
have to live free in this great land.**

In your most holy and precious name we make our prayer.

*All the Best Airborne
Jesse Crews*

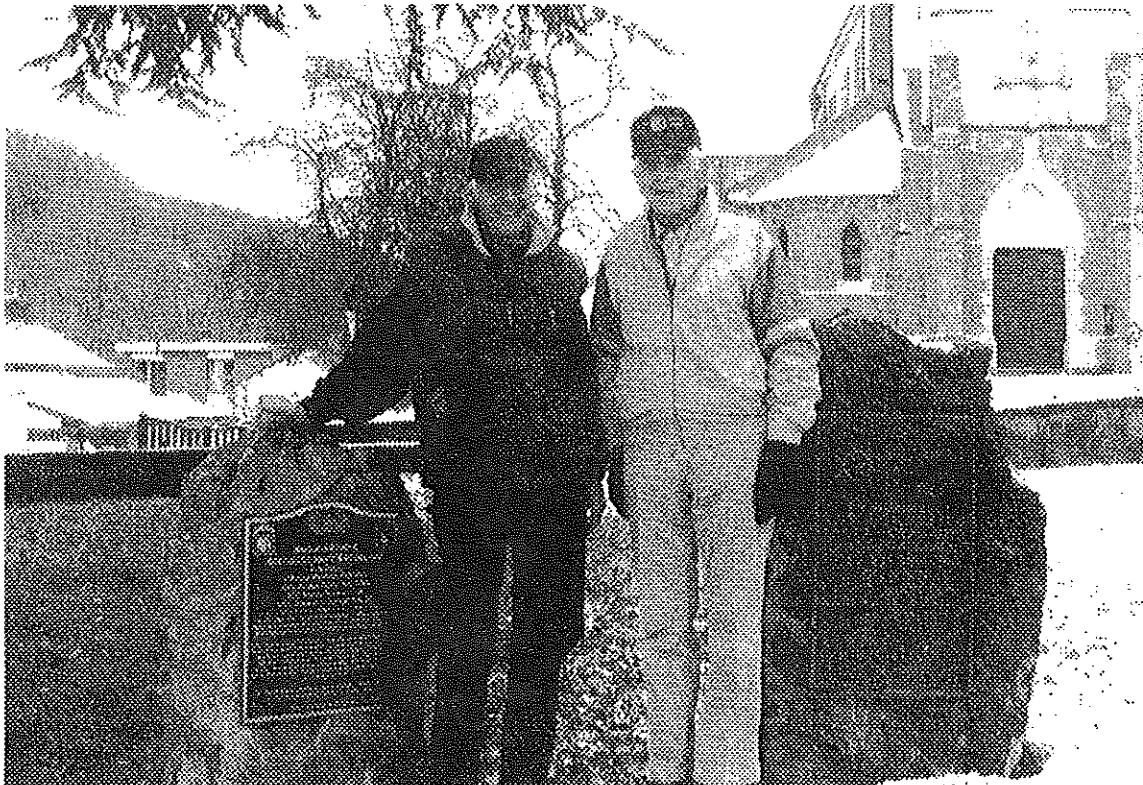
TAPS

Bill tucker	I Co	11-21-08
Robert Atkinson	80 th AA	12-23-08
John Clancy	B Co	1-11-09
Jim Beach	3 rd bn 504 sicily	1-13-09
ALLEN MCGURIE	HAC 3 rd	9-30-08
Mrs James Lemire		12-31-08
Husband Jim	A Co	
Alice Ewing		1-24-09
Husband Sgt Mag	E Co	
Steve Epps	F Co	1-30-09
Reed Potter	HHC	6-18-08

Our Condolences to the families and Friends of our Departed. May they rest in peace.

Many of our good comrades are suffering from many ailments. We offer you a Ray of sunshine; get well soon.

Please send all death notices to Don McKeage 973 gladys St. SW Derby Lake Stantoon, Mi. 48888-9122



074
EM
→

505
MEM
←

EMILE RAY FARY 80th AA

LTC Vandervoort ordered his gun section (2, .57 MM guns) into Ste Saveur Le Vicomteto support E company which was bogged down in the town facing German armor and artillery in a rear guard action. the jeeps towed their gun to different locations. One became famous as Robert Cappa photographed it for Life Magazine after it had been knocked out by a mortar barrage, trying to KO a German tank at the other end of the street. Three mates were killed instantly, 5 more seriously wounded, one dying inside of 48 hours.

Fortunately, Bob was on the "other" gun crew which made it back to England. He made his second glider ride into Holland on Sept 23, this time in the American CG4-A WACO. Inside of 5 days, he was in a foxhole in the town of Erlecom when Pvt Ray Fary awakened him that a German Mark IV tank had approached from the wood line with infantry support. It was less than 100 yards away. He, Ray and CPL Boteler ran to the AT gun, turned it in the direction of the oncoming tank, loaded and fired at it only 65 yards away. The [projectile hit the drive sprocket wheel and stopped the tank. The infantry backed away and the gun crew took up firing positions . To this day, no one can explain why the tank ignored the gun crew and why is fired its MGs in another direction. At such a distance, a German tank would have had no trouble destroying an 80th AA gun crew--as others had done that morning.

But Bob survived to face the Battle of the Bulge where his crew found itself with the 504 in Rahier, defending the 504 against Kamphgruppe Peiper. The 504 caught hell taking Cheneux, but in doing so, it stopped any armored attempt in that sector. His crew could just have easily have been in Trois Ponts with the 505 where 4 AT gun crew members were KIA and 3 others seriously wounded in a tank attack.

In her letter, Mrs Palmeiri wrote..."He was a fighter and fought to the very end but his damaged heart could not carry onward. He loved the 80th AA and the 82nd Airborne. His fellow soldiers were never far from his thoughts...I promised him I would not let him be forgotten... Our nation is losing its greatest generation at an alrming rate...It will be left to sons, daughters and grandchildren to carry forward their sacrifice and service into the future."

Robert Atkinson's story is not unlike many others...but is one I happen to know and unique enough to share with all of you, who will be left to tell similar stories.

Bob BURNS

Military History - Stranger than Fiction

by Col. D.G. Swinford, USMC, Ret.
HISTORY BUFF

1. The first German serviceman killed in WW II was killed by the Japanese (China, 1937), the first American serviceman killed was killed by the Russians (Finland 1940), the highest ranking American killed was Lt. Gen. Lesley McNair, killed by the US Army Air Corps. . . So much for allies.
2. The youngest US serviceman was 12 year old Calvin Graham, USN. **He was wounded and given a Dishonorable Discharge** for lying about his age. (His benefits were later restored by act of Congress)
3. At the time of Pearl Harbor the top US Navy command was Called CINCUS (pronounced "sink us"), the shoulder patch of the US Army's 45th Infantry division was the Swastika, and Hitler's private train was named "Amerika." All three were soon changed for PR purposes.
4. **More US servicemen died in the Air Corps than the Marine Corps. While completing the required 30 missions your chance of being killed was 71%.**
5. **Generally speaking there was no such thing as an average fighter pilot. You were either an ace or a target. For instance Japanese ace Hiroyoshi Nishizawa shot down over 80 planes. He died while a passenger on a cargo plane.**
6. **It was a common practice on fighter planes to load every 5th round with a tracer round to aid in aiming. This was a mistake. Tracers had different ballistics so (at long range) if your tracers were hitting the target 80% of your rounds were missing. Worse yet tracers instantly told your enemy he was under fire and from which direction. Worst of all was the practice of loading a string of tracers at the end of the belt to tell you that you were out of ammo. This was definitely not something you wanted to tell the enemy. Units that stopped using tracers saw their success rate nearly double and their loss rate go down.**
7. **When allied armies reached the Rhine the first thing men did was pee in it. This was pretty universal from the lowest private to Winston Churchill (who made a big show of it) and Gen. Patton (who had himself photographed in the act).**
8. **German Me-264 bombers were capable of bombing New York City but it wasn't worth the effort.**
9. **German submarine U-120 was sunk by a malfunctioning toilet.**
10. **Among the first "Germans" captured at Normandy were several Koreans. They had been forced to fight for the Japanese Army until they were captured by the Russians and forced to fight for the Russian Army until they were captured by the Germans and forced to fight for the German Army until they were captured by the US Army.**

AND THE BEST FOR LAST....

11. **Following a massive naval bombardment 35,000 US and Canadian troops stormed ashore at Kiska, in the Aleutian Islands. 21 troops were killed in the firefight. It would have been even worse if there had been any Japanese on the island.**

Subject: Assistance for U.S. Army War College Strategy Research Paper (Thesis)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Most of you know me, but for overall consistency, a quick intro..... I am LTC Elizabeth Coble. While I have served in two Airborne units, I have never been assigned to the 82d, but I am a life member of the 82d Airborne Division Association. I have two masters degrees. My first one was in History. My specialty is 20th US Military History. I did my thesis on LTG James Gavin. I am currently a student at the U.S. Army War College. I wrote a Strategic Leadership paper on LTG Gavin for a recent class requirement.

I am doing my Strategy Research Paper (thesis equivalent) at the War College on Operation MARKET GARDEN, specifically the 82d's AO. I was also approved to do an Elective on 82d Veterans' Oral History of MARKET GARDEN.

It is my goal in these two projects to help capture more of the 82d's history, especially from Veterans who have not yet told their stories.

I am asking for your assistance in finding men who are still alive who participated MARKET GARDEN and would be willing to talk with me about it. I am also interested in any unpublished accounts of MARKET GARDEN that I could use. This could include audio or video tapes, handwritten notes or letters, or typed documents.

I am willing to travel to do interviews, if the Veteran is not willing to do a telephonic interview. I would also pay for any associated costs, like photocopying or audio tape copying, that may be required.

I can use the info and do the interviews through late February 2009. Then I would have to stop to be able to write my findings in time to meet the suspense date.

If you support this effort, request that you send this out to your 82d Veterans, Family and Friends members, or others who might be willing and able to help.

I apologize in advance if I am not sending this to all of the correct people. For example, I know that I should have sent this to Steve Frazier and Manny DeJesus, but I do not have their E:Mail addresses. Please forward as required.

Please let me know if you have any questions. Thanks in advance for your assistance.

Liz

LTC Elizabeth Coble
cell 703-344-4016
alternate email: elizabeth.coble@us.army.mil

Hi Don You asked about what had I been doing? About 5 years ago, I started talking to local groups about my military experiences during 22 years of Army service. A good friend convinced me that groups would like to hear them. I have spoken with groups from 20 persons to over 600 at a high school. I have spoken with groups from Kiwanis and Lions clubs, elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools. I spoke with the ROTC unit from UCCS (University of Colorado at Colorado Springs). A week later I was invited to their graduation and the Col in charge, presented me with a BDU uniform [desert] cap, jacket, trousers, all insignia, and desert boots. It is a Mountain Ranger Battalion I was told that I had been designated as Honorary Commander of the Mountain Ranger Battalion. My name is on the programs and I am invited to Battalion functions and introduced. I have had several good meals! I speak from 1 hour to two hours, depending on what group I am speaking with I cover from the time I entered the Army at age 16 in 1940 until the war ended in Germany in 1945. I was with Co. G 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment from the time we formed it Ft. Benning, Ga. 1942 until the war ended in Europe in May 1945. I made all four combat jumps with the company { Sicily, Italy, Normandy { D Day } and Holland I made all 6 campaigns I was a commo Sgt all this time. What most people did not know was that if you had any enlisted rank { PFC to Master Sgt }, when you volunteered for the parachute training and was accepted, you were transferred with the rank of Private! I allow questions at any time during the presentation. We get many good ones and a few not so good. I returned home with the first group. I was discharged, stayed out of the Army for one year and reenlisted in Co. G, 505 at Fort Bragg. In 1948 I was accepted for OCS (6 months) at Fort Riley, Kansas. In June, 1948, I graduated and was commissioned a 2nd Lt, I went back to Ft. Benning and was assigned to the Airborne Bn. In Sept 1950. I was sent to Korea and assigned to Co. G 8th Cavalry 1st Cavalry Division. The day I got to the company, we had a big fire. In less than 2 weeks, I was seriously wounded, by a mortar shell. I woke up in a MASH hospital with casts on both arms and hands and both legs. I was returned to a Tokyo hospital, and back to the states, ending up in the Army and Navy Hospital in Hot Springs, Arkansas. The doctors told me I was the hospital celebrity. When I asked why, he told me that I was the only patient in the hospital who was wounded in all five extremities! After 8 months, I was released and sent back to Ft Benning and assigned back to the Airborne Bn. I served there and with The Infantry School for 5 years. I was sent to Hawaii for 3 years, I was assigned to Ft Carson, Colorado where I served 5 years, three of them as Assistant Chief of Staff, Hq, Ft. Carson and the 9th Infantry Division. We deactivated the 9th Division and activated the 5th Infantry Division I served in the same position until Nov 63, when I retired with 22 Years service. I was a Major. I decided I wanted to teach 6th Grade, I went to Omaha University for 6 months and earned a B.A. in education I then went to Greeley, Colo, University of Colorado at Greeley. Stayed there for 2 years where I earned a Master of Arts degree in Elementary Education plus several other credits in graduate school. I took two years because my two sons were enrolled and completed B.A Degrees in Education. That was a fun time. I returned to Colorado Springs and a position as 6th Grade Teacher in Dist. 11, a city district with 30,000 students. I taught for 20 years and retired in 1986. I received a Distinguished Teacher Award My wife was not in the best of health, In 1988, she had a stroke and could not walk, A physical Therapist and I worked with her for three years and she recovered. In 1993, she had another stroke and did not recover very well. I, with help, took care of her at home until 2006 when I had to place her in a skilled care facility, She died a year later in 2007 She was my wife and best friend for 60 years and I miss her terribly,
Henry "Duke"
Boswell

Subject: The 82nd Airborne Division will host its 63rd National Convention

The 82nd Airborne Division will host its 63rd National Convention from Aug. 19-22 in Indianapolis. Membership has veterans from the 11th, 13th, 17th, 82nd, 101st and today's special forces. The division is seeking the many veterans who have passed through in the past 66 years to record their deeds for history for younger generations. Combat is not a requirement, only the wings earned through hard work and determination. For complete details on events and membership, contact Airborne 2009, 5459 Northcutt Place, Dayton, OH 45414, call (937)898-5977 or e-mail srgabn@aol.com.



Fred
P.P

medics

John

Subject: Re: In The Footsteps of the 82nd/Praise for our valiant troops

Dear one and all, I hope there are many WW II vets that will receive this. I am so proud of all you did in the name of freedom, and the ultimate ousting of Hitler. I only wish I had met my grandfather, (US) Maj. Frederick C.A. Kellam. He was killed in action at La Fiere Bridge, near Ste Mere Eglise, France. I've been researching his life and achievements, and it's really given me awesome respect of your galliant fighting in the name of freedom. God Bless You All!!! Christine Kellam Nardone

Subject: Re: Arthur M. Thompson.

Dear Frits: I have seen your name on many E-Mails. I know many of those you know. Jim, Ellen, ellen was just getting back from Belgium to-day; from Emile's March in the foot steps of the 82nd A/B. I was in F-Co 2nd bn 505 RCT. since WWII I have been back 10 times, Last June I came with my two grand sons. Ben Thissen has moved into the Home by the wind mill and a great friend of mine. The Derks on the other end of Groesbeek are great friends. When we arrived Sept 17th 44, I landed in a sugar Beet field back of Derks restaurant. Bill is no longer with us, but the boys run the place. I did not know Art Thompson S# 18109208 art. was in I co 3rd Bn 505. Cib Sicily Deceased 6-94. Like I say I did not know ART. I was the first president of the 505 Rct when we formed in 1986 and many times since. I have a master roster with what feel has all the names of the 505 men WWII. We lost 690 KIA's. E&F Co,s took Hunner Park in Nijmegen; we lost 22 men KIA there and a nother 50 wounded from our Co. We will see if we can find any old trooper from I co who might have remembered art. There isn't many of us left. I am starting the Panther very soon and we will put in a notice and see what we can find for you. In the mean time keep our fingers crossed for you.
Don McKeage Prez

----- Original Message -----

From: Frits Janssen

To: Don McKeage President 505RCT Assn.

Sent: Tuesday, February 17, 2009 10:17 AM

Subject: Arthur M. Thompson.

Dear Sir,

First of all I want to apologize for writing you this message. I don't think you know me. I've got your eMail from the 505 F&F of which I am also a member.

My name is Frits Janssen and I live in Mook, The Netherlands. I am the chairman of the "Remember September 1944" Foundation.

Our foundation received a cap which once belonged to Arthur M Thompson. I found out on the 505RCT roster, made by Joe Meyers and mister Gillete, that you confirmed the death of mister Thompson in 1995. Now I was wondering if you could provide me a little more information on him, that we could use in our upcoming exhibition this September?

Jim Blankenship and Ellen Peters are very good friends of mine and they know me very well.

If there is anything I can do for you, just let me know.

Hope this message reach you in good health and that I hear soon from you.

Yours truly,

Frits Janssen

Mook, The Netherlands

www.rememberseptember1944.com

Subject: Taps: Steven Epps Sr. F Co. 505PIR

It saddens me deeply to inform everyone that Steven Epps, F Company 505PIR, passed away on Friday night, Jan 30th. Steve Jr. called me Sat. morning with the bad news. Steve had been in the hospital a couple of days with heart problems and he was given a pacemaker last Wednesday. That didn't help much and his heart finally gave out.

I first met Steve Epps in 1946 when he visited my Mother and Dads home in Asheville, NC. Steve was on his honeymoon with his wife Mary and he came to talk to our parents about my brother Charles. He and Charles were good friends after they realized they were from the same hometown, Rock Hill, SC.

Steve was a replacement to the 505PIR, joining the regiment in Cookstown, N. Ireland in December 1943. Upon leaving Quorn, England 31 May 1944 the 505PIR was moved to the airport staging area (Cotswold, I think) they awaited D Day orders. The night before the invasion Steve told me he and Charles made a pact that if anything happened to one of them the other one would visit their parents back home. When the cemetery's in Sainte Mer Eglise were disinterred in the spring of 1948 Charles body was shipped home for burial in the family cemetery in Rock Hill, SC. On June 5, 1948 my brother finally came home. What is so special is that Steve Epps & John Zunda, both of F Company and Charles close friends came to the funeral as his Pall Bearers. Having Steve & John there meant so very much to me and my family.

Our hearts go out to Steve Epps Jr and his family at this difficult time. Our deepest sympathy from all of our Family & Friends.

Condolences can be sent to: Steve Epps, Jr.
222 Stoney Creek Dr.
Greenville, SC 29607

Pictures are from

from a red ribbon. After our visit to the wax museum, we climbed the 226 steps to the top of the Lion's Hillock, an artificial hill constructed after the battle with a large lion on top.

That evening we all drove to Brussels and had dinner at the hotel restaurant where Ray and I stayed that night prior to returning home.

Tuesday morning, Ray and I ate breakfast in the hotel restaurant and then took a taxi to the airport. We flew to Amsterdam where we parted company as we were on different flights back to the U.S. I arrived home late Tuesday night.

My photos from the trip can be seen at www.eeptx.phanfare.com

Airborne All The Way – Ellen Peters



Ray FARY

Emile

joined them. Everyone in the hall joined in. At the end of the song someone yelled "AIRBORNE" and the rest of the hall shouted "ALL THE WAY". It was a lot of fun and a very late night.

Sunday morning we all met at Joseph's house in Bra. Emile was there as well as Ann Marie and Pascal. We all went to the medical evacuation site. These were the people who evacuated Ray when he was so ill in 2007. Emile was making his annual donation from proceeds of the march to them this year. He gave the donation to Ray and Ray presented it to the helicopter pilot. He was very grateful to receive such a kind and generous donation.

We drove to Baraque de Fraiture, site of the famous Parker's Crossroads, where we met Maria and Tracy at a café there. We enjoyed a cup of coffee and drove to Baugnez and the site of the Malmedy Massacre memorial. One of the stories Ray told me on the plane over was about finding a dead German outside St. Vith and finding papers on him that belonged to an American soldier. Years later, when Bob Burns was visiting Ray they looked up the guys unit and discovered that he was one of the soldiers murdered in the Malmedy Massacre. While visiting the memorial, we all took pictures of Ray pointing to Sgt. Snyder's name on the wall. Then we walked down to the museum where we had a lovely lunch at the museum restaurant. Maria and Tracy seemed to enjoy listening to Ray's stories. As soon as he finished one story, I was telling him, "tell them this story – tell them that story."

Nicole, Pol, and I left the others to tour the museum as we had toured it the previous year. They took me around to various Battle of the Bulge battle sites that I was interested in seeing. We visited Butchenbach, Bullingen, Krinkelt, Rocherath, and Elsenborn Ridge.

That night, Pol told me a story about American troops, who stayed in his family's home when Belgium was liberated in September, 1944. Men of the 531st Engineer Shore Regiment stayed there. One of the soldiers bought a crèche for Christmas. He was unable to leave with it when it left, so he left it at Pol's home. Pol and Nicole still put the crèche out every Christmas. They also showed me some Christmas tree ornaments left there by soldiers at the same time. They still put the ornaments on their tree every year, however due to breakage over the years; they only have two ornaments left.

Monday morning, Nicole, Pol and I drove to Waterloo to tour the battlefield sites there. We visited the house, now a museum, where Napoleon had his CP for a couple of days prior to the battle. We visited a place called "La Belle Alliance" and stood on the exact place where Napoleon stood and viewed the battle. We also, visited the site where Wellington viewed the battle. It was very interesting. Emile and Ray met us in a restaurant and we had a couple of beers, then we went to the Battle of Waterloo museum where we saw a video all about the battle. It was very interesting. We also toured a wax museum and climbed the 226 steps to the top of the Lion's Hillock, an artificial hill constructed after the battle with a large lion on top.

That evening we all drove to Brussels and had dinner at the hotel restaurant where Ray and I stayed that night prior to returning home.

Saturday morning we got up at 5:00 AM to arrive in Bra by 7:00. Nicole and Pol were responsible for selling the tickets to the march. We met in the banquet hall and a number of re-enactors were already there. Everyone was eating breakfast that Emile provided for everyone. People continued to arrive. I was surprised at the number in attendance due to the weather. It was very cold and had been snowing ever since I arrived in Belgium, however the day of the march, despite the weather forecast, which called for snow, the weather cleared up somewhat. The sky was overcast, and there were some snow flurries, however, for the most part, the snow remained at bay until after the march. I enjoyed myself greeting marchers as they arrived. I was surprised to see so many familiar faces. LTC. Maria Eoff, whom I met last year, was there with her friend, Tracy. Tracy is a Master Sergeant in the army. Both are stationed in Germany. Tommy McArdle was there with his group. It is always wonderful to see Tommy. French friends, Nathalie and Fred Tulpin, were there as well.

There was a large group of re-enactors from the U.K. and those guys were really funny. They seemed to be having the time of their lives. As they headed out for the march, their leader had them marching in formation. I think their ages ranged from 14 to 40! One guy was carrying a 30 cal. machine gun on his shoulder. Talk about realism!

We all walked down the street from the banquet hall to the "Castle" where Claire Naveau, the owner of the castle, and Ray laid a wreath beneath the plaque stating that General Gavin had used the building as his CP. Family and Friends member, Tommy McArdle, said a few words explaining the situation at the time and Emile spoke to the French marchers. A wreath was also laid at an 80th AA monument in Bra.

After all the marchers had left, Nicole, Pol, and I drove to Villettes where they had already begun setting up for the lunch. Marchers started drifting in. It was there that I ran into my Dutch friend, Frenk Derks van de Ven, whom I met at last year's march. It was wonderful to see him again. He brought me some delicious cookies from Holland. He and his friend drove over that morning and drove back right after the march. It was fun visiting with the various marchers as they came trickling in. When the last of the marchers passed through Villettes and continued on the march, we returned to the banquet hall in Bra to wait for them to return and hand out the certificates. Jeannie Melcher and Jan Bos of Holland arrived and set up to sell various items they had brought. I bought an 82nd Airborne hat from Jeannie and a DVD on the history of the 376th PFAB from Jan. I had a nice visit with them and it was really great to see them again.

After the march, there was a memorial service for Bob Murphy at the local church. Several people marched in carrying various flags. Tommy McArdle carried the 82nd Airborne flag. The service was lovely with two priests officiating. Claire Naveau spoke as did Emile. The service was all in French. I didn't understand a word, but it was beautiful. Communion was offered at the end of the service. A slide show was shown during part of the service with the title sheet stating, "They were all young boys and we will never forget them." The photos were all war time photos and I was surprised at the number of photos I recognized.

We returned to the banquet hall in Bra for the annual banquet. It was a lot of fun. LTC. Maria Eoff got some of the troopers up on the stage with her to sing the All American Soldier song. Tommy McArdle and his group

laid the 505th wreath together and Ray laid the 80th AA wreath. As we lay the wreath on the 505th monument, I couldn't help but think of my dear friend, Bob Murphy. The wreaths were absolutely gorgeous and a gift from Frits Janssen's Dutch association. It really touched my heart to see this fine Dutch association provide the wreaths to be laid on monuments in Belgium.

After the wreath laying, we walked down to street to look for Ray's friend, retired U.S. Army Col. Mike Emerson, who now lives in Trois Pons and owns a bakery. We ran into him at the veterinarian's office where he and his wife were getting their dogs and cats vaccinated. He and Ray had a brief visit and then we drove over to the Salm River to go over the area where E Co. made their valiant stand and Lt. Jake Wertich and Cpl. Stokes Taylor of the 80th AA Btn. lost their lives. The film crew interviewed Ray at the site where it is believed the 57 mm gun was set up.

Next, we drove to Cheneux. Ray showed us the exact location of his gun. It was very interesting. Then we drove to Coe and ate a lovely lunch at a restaurant there. After lunch, we went to museum at La Gleize. While the film crew interviewed Ray, Frits, Teo, and I toured the museum.

Friday morning, when we arrived at Ida and Joseph's home, Pascal Hainaut and his lovely wife, Nathalie, were there as well as Anne Marie. It was really nice to see Nathalie and Pascal again. They are such nice people. A couple of years ago, Pascal wrote a book about Joe Cicchinelli and the 551st PIB. He used the proceeds to erect two monuments to the 551st. One at the Noirefontaine Farm and the other at Dairomont that was dedicated at last year's March. He gave me a 551st patch.

There was yet another film crew at Joseph's interviewing Joseph and Ray. This one was made up of two Americans who live in Budapest. They are doing a documentary on the Battle of the Bulge from the civilian perspective. We watched while they interviewed Joseph and Ray. They brought a translator with them from Bastogne, to interpret Joseph's comments and ask him questions. This man was also a young child during the war. Later he and I were talking about all the knocked out tanks and equipment that were left behind as the battle moved on. He said when his children were young and playing with toy tanks, he told them how he played with the real thing when he was a child! He also told me that when he returned home from school one day, he learned that his two best friends had been killed when they were playing with a previously unexploded shell.

After the interview at the kitchen table, we all went for a walk around Bra. We walked to the site of Joseph's war time home (the home is no longer there) and Ray showed us where he had his gun set up. While on the walk, a Danish friend, Jurgen Rosenquist joined us. We walked down to the "Castle" where General Gavin had his CP for a couple of days. They showed us a home where there is still a shell stuck in one of the outside walls. We also visited an 80th AA monument to Pfc. Jesse Dillon and Pvt. Andrew Matsko.

Emile had to leave us to go make the final preparations for Saturday's march. Nicole, Pol, and I left Ray at Joseph's and drove to Diekirch, Luxembourg and toured a truly spectacular museum there. On the way back, we drove through St. Vith. The only monuments we could find, were one to the 106th Infantry Division and one to General Eisenhower, however that one was covered in snow and we were unable to see it!

Emile Lacroix's 28th annual "In the Footsteps of the 82nd" march was a huge success with from 800 to 1,000 people attending. There was a large group of British re-enactors in attendance as well as a bunch of American soldiers stationed in Germany. Emile is an amazing man and the 82nd Airborne is truly blessed to have a man such as he preserving its memory. The more I learn about Emile, the more I realize what a fine man he is. It is a privilege for me to call him my friend.

On February 10, I flew to Detroit, Michigan where I met 80th Abn, AA veteran, Ray Fary. We managed to get seats across the aisle from each other on the plane and Ray had me enthralled with story after story until I could no longer keep my eyes open and I had to take a nap. He brought along all kinds of document copies and photos which really enhanced the stories. He told me

Upon arrival in Brussels, our Dutch friend, Fritz Janssen and his brother, Teo, picked us up. It was cold, cold, cold in Belgium, but this year I was prepared. Last year I nearly froze half to death, so this year I brought my heavy winter coat, hat, gloves, and scarf. Everyone else was wearing jackets! Of course, I had come from nearly spring like weather in Texas, so the cold was a shock to my system.

We drove to the home of Ida and Joseph Fourgon of Bra, Belgium. Ray met Joseph for the first time when he spent a couple of nights at his home over Christmas in 1944. He had his gun set up right outside Joseph's home. Joseph was a child of 12 or 13 at the time. They next saw each other in the 1970's when Ray made his first trip back. Since then, he has stayed at Joseph's home many times. I found it interesting to note that these two men have had this incredible friendship which spans more than 30 years, yet they have never had an actual conversation as Joseph does not speak English and Ray does not speak French.

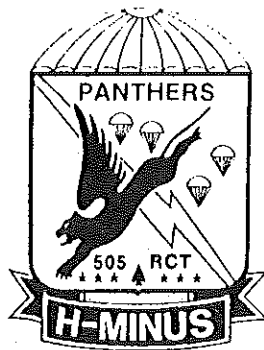
We had a lovely visit at Ida and Joseph's home. Nicole and Pol Meunier arrived as did our good friend, Anne Marie Lemort. Anne Marie is always so full of enthusiasm; it was wonderful to see her again. During our visit, Joseph brought out many photos and war time artifacts he had found while Ida served us real Belgian waffles. The artifacts included a 57mm shell casing, a 20 mm shell casing, a gammon grenade found in his garden a few years ago, and the helmet liner of a 507th trooper with the trooper's name and serial number clearly visible inside it. I have forwarded this information on to Col. Frank Naughton of the 507th to see if we can find out some information about this trooper.

As Nicole, Pol, and I left Joseph's home, it began to snow. It was really coming down. We drove to Nicole and Pol's beautiful home in Remicourt, where we drank a few glasses of Pommeau, and ate a lovely quiche dinner. I was unpacked and in bed by 10:00 PM. I was really tired.

On Thursday morning, it was really snowing. We drove to Joseph's home in Bra where we met Emile, Fritz, and Teo. The whole way to Bra, I was hanging out the car window taking pictures of the beautiful scenery. Shortly after we arrived, a film crew from the U.S. army showed up to interview Ray about his war time experiences. We all went to Trois Ponts to lay wreaths on the 80th AA and 505th Monuments there. Ray and I



505 PIR.



82nd A/B Div.

505th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Dear ladies & Gentlemen of the famous 505 RCT
With family & friends. Our 23RD year will be
Starting soon. Oh where did the years fly by so
Fast. Our WWII Veterans continue to leave us at
A very fast rate. And our #'s are getting smaller
Each passing day. We have ask our family and
Friends members to take over the work load of
Setting up the reunions each yr. Bob Burns, the
President of Family & Friends, did a great job
At the last years Reunion. And now he has been
Working on this years reunion, he and his comm
Have just gave us the word, that we are going
Out to the State of Washington for this years
Reunion August 27-30. That should work just
Fine; Traveling just before Labor Day weekend.
We want to see a great turn out to the Far North
West corner of the lower 48. Lets all make our
Plans for a great Reunion Your Prez Don

505th RCT WWII UNITS

****505 PIR * 456PFA * B-307ENG * 307MEDICS * 80AA****