

505 R.C.T. WWII

Regimental Combat Team



873 Gladys St.
Darby Lake
Stanton, Michigan 48888-9122



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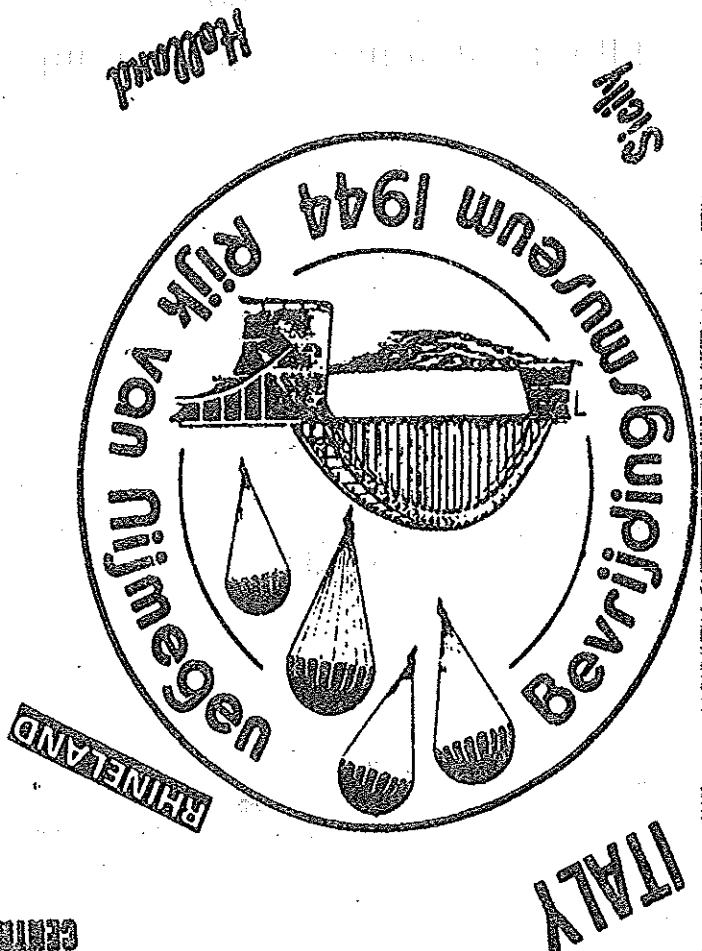
#3

Dec. 2009

The Panther

Otis Sampson, Jr.
42 Valley Rd.
Middletown, RI 02842-6376

028426376 6044



CENTRAL EUROPE



**505 PARACHUTE
R.C.T.
ASSOCIATION**



ROBERT J. BURNS - President
FF 505 RCT Assoc
2453 Loft Ave, Baldwin, NY 11510
PH: (516) 867-2918 - (516) 770-1815 Cell

The 505 reunion in Tacoma was another success with more than 60 attendees of which 18 were WW II Veterans of the 505 RCT. The West Coast location brought out some who we haven't seen in a while including DUKE BOSWELL (G Co), BOB GILLETTE (Rgt HHC) and BOB SLAWSON and his wife. BOB was one of the Devil's Brigade (First Special Forces) troops who volunteered to join the 82nd Airborne (B Co 505) when his outfit was disbanded late 1944-- and he looked especially fit and sharp in his 1945 Eisenhower jacket and bloused pants, sporting all his fruit-salad.

A Company's RICHIE REYES was another fresh face who told me about his assignment to scrounge for supplies off the downed gliders to supply the troopers defending the Lafiere Bridgehead area west of Ste Mere Eglise, especially using his swimming ability to get to those CG4-A Wacos that landed in the flooded areas. Platoon Sergeant KARL PAUL and his wife came in from Idaho with plans to go on to Holland. He made a great contribution with his "war memories" at our Veteran's forum Friday night.

It was great to see, again, Vets whose birthday milestones will be 100,90+ warriors like COL ED SAYRE (Ret.) (A Co), ROBERT (DOC) FRANCO (505 medics) and OTIS SAMPSON (E Co) who lauded his mates from E... JOHN PEROZZI and MERVYN SHUMAN - who like a great trooper made it up and down the tour bus steps eight times, refusing an easier car ride because he wanted to ride the bus with his buddies.

F Company had youngster (84) DON McKEAGE, 'CANUCK' BUFF OLDRIDGE and RUSS BROWN to represent them. And ALLEN BARGER represented his D Company comrades.

Congratulations to DUANE "PINKY" PINKSTON (C Co) who was elected President of the 505 RCT group. When Past President DON McKEAGE, who served his comrades so well, decided he needed some relief, PINKY answered the call of "Medic" just as he had done during his campaign in Europe 65 years ago. Doc FRANCO continues as Vice President, BARBARA FORTENBAUGH as Asst VP, ELLEN PETERS as Sec-Treas, DON McKEAGE as Director/Panther Editor, ED SAYRE as Director in charge of research, TED GAWEDA, Liaison to the 505 RCT at Ft Bragg, Chaplain JESSE CREWS, Trustees DAVE BULLINGTON and BOB GILLETTE, and JOHN SPARRY as Webmaster.

The Family & Friends group re-elected BOB BURNS, President, KATIE DUMKE TROCCOLI, VP, ELLEN PETERS, Sec-Treas., and trustees GENE GARREN, BARBARA GAVIN FAUNTLEROY and JIM BLANKENSHIP. Also re-elected was RAY FARY, Veteran's Liaison. DUKE BOSWELL was unanimously elected as the new 4-year Trustee.

Two important decisions were made at the BoD and General Meeting... to return next year's reunion to Ft Bragg and to begin to raise money to emplace monuments to the 505 RCT KIAs in all the countries where the major campaigns were fought. Presently, such memorials only exist in Belgium. Italy, France, Holland and Germany are all future overseas projects.

Business aside, the trip to Fort Lewis and McChord AFB was enlightening and enjoyable. The Museum at Ft Lewis was extensive, with indoor displays depicting the Lewis & Clark expeditions, the founding of Ft Lewis, uniforms, equipment and weaponry on display from WW I, WW II, Korea and beyond as Ft Lewis was home to storied Infantry Divisions like the 2nd and 3rd ID. The 2nd fought a terrific action in the Battle of the Bulge and the 3rd was made famous through the exploits of AUDIE MURPHY in Italy, the most decorated soldier of WW II. The outdoor exhibition featured a variety of armored cars, tanks, howitzers and anti-tank gun as well as anti-aircraft displays. Most agreed that at least another hour was needed to get the full effect of what was on display.

A visit to the Stryker Simulator facility allowed the WW II Veterans to fire modern day weaponry and to see, through virtual magic, how the streets of Baghdad are patrolled and bad guys blasted away.

Veterans and their family and friends also had the chance to sit in the Stryker vehicles, which have been specially outfitted with metal, cage-like barriers, to fend off IED blasts that have killed and wounded so many in lightly armored Humvees in the Wars on Terror in Afghanistan and Iraq. Tour guides included Stryker Brigade soldiers who have lost limbs but not their will to survive and thrive in today's Army.

Under deadline pressure and working from memory, I'm sure I left out some names of deserving troopers who made the effort to cross country and be amongst the Best of the Best.

I would be remiss without thanking ELLEN PETERS and KATIE TROCCOLI for making my job easier, and BARBARA "FRANCO" SHEERER, whose vision and hard work made for a well-stocked and visually pleasing Hospitality Room. A special shout out to JAN SILVER who always pitches in where needed, who usually says "yes" before she even thinks about saying no.

AIRBORNE ATWII!



*Only man in unit
uniform*

Family & Friends of the 505 RCT Association
Governing Board 2009-2010

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Panther Reminder - Please inform Don McKeage, Panther Editor, of any address changes as the Panther's are not returned by the post office. It is your responsibility to notify us. Undelivered Panther's waste association money. We are trying to come up with new ideas to make money, we do not have money to throw away. Besides, you are missing out on all the new 505 RCT news. So please send address changes to Don McKeage, 973 Gladys St, Derby Lake, Stanton, MI 48888. Thank you.

505 RCT Board for 2009-2010

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Webmaster - John Sparry, 1457 Inwood Ct, Campbell, CA 95008-4406; Home
408-429-0098

Update on Panther Editor - Don McKeage

Don went to the 505 RCT reunion 5 weeks after having knee replacement surgery. He returned home to have a flare up of gout arthritis in his fingers. One finger broke open and he got a staph infection. After several weeks of different antibiotics and it continuing to get worse, the Dr amputated his finger and put him on daily IV antibiotic treatments for the staph. He has been taking the daily trip to the hospital for the last 6 wks for his treatment. This week we received good news that his blood level was up and they were changing his treatments to every other day. This schedule will give his body time to regain his strength at a faster rate. Please continue to keep him and mom in your prayers. Due to all the medical treatments, and the fact he is relearning to write without his index finger, he did not get Christmas wishes sent out. They are thinking of all their F&F and 505 RCT friends and hoping you are all enjoying good health, and had the best of holiday seasons. Barbara

T-5 Ellen



dwmdrby

From: "Gene Garren" <genegarren@aol.com>
To: "Ellen Peters" <eeptx@sbcglobal.net>
Cc: "Robert Burns" <rjburns19@aol.com>; "Ted Gaweda" <CSMGaweda@aol.com>; "Jim Blankinship" <ff505rct@charter.net>; "Barbara/Gavin Fountleroy" <gavin505@comcast.net>; "Katie Troccoli" <katiet1@sbcglobal.net>; <Bos930@aol.com>; "Ray Fary" <RFARY@Mailstation.com>; "Don McKeage" <dwmdrby@charter.net>; "Bob Gillette" <bobgillette3@verizon.net>; "Rock Merritt" <kmerritt2@nc.rr.com>; "Luis J. Gutierrez" <lgutierrez@nc.rr.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 09, 2009 12:33 AM
Subject: Re: 505RCT REUNION-2010

Hello folks. Ellen is right on the money. The Holiday Inn-Bordeaux was also used for the Special Forces Ball back in 2000 when I was serving my last assignment at the SF School. Also as Ellen mentioned we had our 508 reunion there in October of 08. It's a great place and they have lots of experience with groups. I was the hospitality room head bartender and Ellen is right, the room was about as big as the one used at the annual Airborne Awards. Lots of room and really great. Has it's own built in bar. That's my story and I'm sticking to it. Gene Garren
On Dec 8, 2009, at 2:49 PM, Ellen Peters wrote:

I highly recommend the Holiday Inn - Bordeaux in Fayetteville as the location for our reunion. The 508th had it's 2008 reunion there and it was great. It is within walking distance of several restaurants and it had the nicest hospitlity room I have ever seen. I would also recommend contacting Lisa Hagerty at Experient to help negotiate room rates, hospitality room, etc. This is what she does for military groups and it won't cost us anything. Her email address is lisa.hagerty@experient-inc.com.

Ellen

From: "rjburns19@aol.com" <rjburns19@aol.com>
To: CSMGaweda@aol.com
Cc: ff505rct@charter.net; gavin505@comcast.net; katiet1@sbcglobal.net; eeptx@sbcglobal.net; Bos930@aol.com; RFARY@Mailstation.com; genegarren@aol.com; dwmdrby@charter.net; bobglillette3@verizon.net
Sent: Mon, December 7, 2009 10:09:18 PM
Subject: Re: 505RCT REUNION-2010

CSM Ted: Thank you for a quick, incisive and succinct reply. Off base lodging is what we will persue. Where we stay is less important than a program that can include a visit to the base and a visit from a 3BCT officer to be our speaker. Unless visiting the base is off limits, I feel confident that we will develop a successful reunion program, nevertheless. I will await more info from CSM Parks and COL Alex as it develops and responses from the 505 trustees.
As to the Wounded Warriors rehabbing at Moon Hall...they are in our thoughts and prayers. I'll have more to say on that at a later time. The Regiment has earned its leave and I speak for all of the Family & Friends who are so pleased that these Panthers will be re-united for the Holidays with their families...God Bless Them All
Bob

-----Original Message-----
From: CSMGaweda@aol.com

Dear Don,

10-3-2009

It sounds like the reunion in Washington was a great success. I have missed two in a row now and that is far too many. I'll be there next year even if it's held in Antarctica.

By the way, I have written a book about my grandfather's (Mark Alexander) WWII experiences and it will be published in Spring 2010. I have included a story you told me about what it meant to be a "Mac" in England before the Normandy jump. When an English prostitute was beat up by one of the men, she heard his friend say "Hey Mac, let's get the hell out of here". The next day Colonel Alexander had everyone with "Mac" in his name line up in Class A uniforms while she looked each one up and down, trying to find the one that hit her. Sometime later, one of the men hit Colonel Krause with a log as he came out a door. Krause chased him into the woods, but lost him. Somehow he knew the guy's name was "Mac", so again all the Macs were lined up as he looked for the perpetrator. You Macs certainly were a crazy bunch ☺

Thank you for sharing that story. It provided me details (that are too numerous to repeat in this letter) about my grandfather's time as an executive officer that I otherwise would never have known.

I would encourage yourself and other veterans to write down or record any and all WWII experiences you can. You never know what will be important to your family or the family of another soldier. Capturing a reaction, or a few words said by one of your pals provides some color and gives hints as to his personality and character. For example: I'm sure the family of Lieutenant Case would want to read your write up of the Battle of the Bulge (we have it on our website: <http://www.505rct.org/stories/mckeagebulge.asp>) as he is repeatedly mentioned. But so would Jerome Russell's, and he is only mentioned once -- far away from the fighting.

I know I harp on this subject quite a bit, but as the webmaster for www.505RCT.org, I receive well over a hundred requests each year for information about 505ers who died in battle or since passed on. Don, you and Jim can usually provide their serial number and possibly a list of medals and where they may have served. That's very good, but the family members always want to know more. Sometimes they are looking for specific actions taken during battle, and sometimes they just want to get to know a brave family member that they never had the privilege of meeting.

Did anyone know that the medic, Kelly Buyers, could play the piano? I learned this from a letter I received from Dean McCandless several years ago. At some point Kelly's family will be happy to have that piece of information.

Anyway, keep up the great work with the Panther. I'm looking forward to the next edition.

Airborne!
John Sparry

Hello Mr. Former Prez;

How are you doing? Well, I hope. I hope you had a lovely Thanksgiving. I certainly did.

Is it too late to add something to the next Panther? If not can you please include the following statement:

"Emile Lacroix's annual "In the Footsteps of the 82nd Airborne Division" will take place on February 20, 2010 and will be commemorating the 65th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge. The march will begin at the museum in La Gleize, Belgium and will trace the footsteps of the 504th PIR.

Veterans who do not have email and would like to attend can contact me at 214-352-7002 and I will be happy to assist you in coordinating your travel arrangements with Emile.

Ellen Peters - Treasurer"

Thanks, Mr. Ex Prez.

P.S. This email includes a big hug and smoocher I am sending your way!



E Co GREATS.

Dear Don I hope that now you feel well and that your recovery is complete. I wish you a good health for the year coming as we know that it's the more important thing. Have a good holiday season with your family and your friends. Don't forget that you have a sepcial place in the heart of a Sainte Mere Eglise guy who was ten year old in June 1944. Faithfully from your friend forever.

henri jean Renaud



From: "tommy taylor" <eugenetaylor20032000@yahoo.com>

To: <dwmdrby@charter.net>

Sent: Wednesday, September 16, 2009 4:06 AM

Subject: Hello:

GRAND FATHER KIA TRICE PONTS Belgium.

Don, Hope your doing well with the knee. From the picture's of the reunion it looks like your doing alright. I hate i missed the reunion this year. I always enjoy talking or just listen to you guys speak. Seems like everyone had a good time and had plenty things to do. I guess i'm going to make it to All Ohio ABN Days get together in Cleveland in a couple of weeks. Have some friends that want to see. Hope everything continues going good with legs and everything else. Take care and i'll be in touch. Blue Skies and Soft Landing's, Tommy T.

Subject: Re: Good time in Seattle

Hello, Mr. Former Prez - that is going to take some getting used to. I thought it was a great reunion. I learned a few lessons from the Dayton reunion and put them to good use. I learned a few more this year. When I got home, veteran John Gaetz had left several messages for me. He got confused and thought the reunion was at Ft. Lewis. He said he went over there on Friday and whomever he spoke with knew nothing about us being there. That upsets me as he and his daughters could easily have joined us and I could have told him the reunion was actually at the Marriott. We had another veteran who swears his Panther said the reunion was from August 26-29! Two others thought the reunion ended on August 31. They all sent in their registration forms without keeping a copy and got confused. Next year, we will do up a separate page to go in the Panther in addition to the registration form. I think all the details need to be spelled out on the separate page, so they will have something to refer to. I think we need to put the info in the two Panthers prior to the reunion. I think we tried to get a schedule of events from Bob this year and didn't until the last minute. Next year we will definitely "get it done"!! I will also call everyone as I receive their forms and make sure they understand the dates, places, etc.

I am working on labeling my photos and getting all the final bills paid. I still do not have one from the hotel. I think they may email it to Bob. I wrote him and asked him to send it to me.

Lots of love to you and Jennie,
Ellen

--- On Thu, 9/3/09, dwmderby <dwmderby@charter.net> wrote:

From: dwmderby <dwmderby@charter.net>
Subject: Good time in Seattle
To: "Ellen Peters" <eepx@sbcglobal.net>
Date: Thursday, September 3, 2009, 8:26 AM

Dear Ellen: Did you enjoy the reunion. I figure it was a good one, Hotel was fine, Meals were good; everyone treated us well; fair size crowd; good program. All in all it was great. I am still a little tired. You and Bob did a very good job. You must have gotten many pictures. We want to thank you for all your work. When you get a chance, make me up a set of Mailing labels for our next News letter. Sorry we didn't get a chance to talk much; maybe another time. Lv Past Pres.

Kristie + Roger Dinel

Ellen + Barb Bullseye Turner



Chaplain's Corner

Something to Think About

It seems the whole world is moving too fast and life is passing us by too soon. It's hard to realize that WWII ended 56 years ago. Speed seems to be the driving force and all too often we are caught up in the ways of the world rather than establishing our priorities. Time is most important in our lives and once it is passed we can do nothing about it. We often find ourselves running from reality rather than face priorities that confront us. We need to slow down and look for the good life.

I recently received this poem from a friend:

**"You'd better slow down, don't dance so fast,
Time is short, the music won't last,
When you run so fast to get somewhere,
You miss half the fun of getting there.
When you worry and hurry through the day,
It is like an unopened gift—thrown away.
Life is not a race, do take it slower.
Hear the music before the song is over."
— Author Unknpwn**

**"There is no scientific way of proving the love of God.
The most blessed assurances of life are beyond scientific
proof."
— Rev. A. P. Bailey**

**My prayer is that you may daily receive the gift of love and peace
that can only come from God.**

**All the Best
Airborne,
Jesse Crews**

Dear friends

Today, already just one year ago, we lost a very good friend. Bob Murphy.

As I had the great luck to meet him and be close friend of him, I take this opportunity to remember his souvenir and to tell that we will never forget him, his kindness and sincere friendship.

Here attached is a good picture of him taken at my home in February 2008 after the 82nd Airborne Ardennes march. I chosed this picture as Bob is like we liked to see him, smiling and happy. But about one month after it was taken we got the bad news that he would have to fight his last battle which ended unfortunately on this fatal day of October 3rd, 2008.

To my friend Bob

A big salute

Emile Lacroix and family

was spending a couple of days at Ft. Lewis before heading out. Previously in his career he had spent three years stationed in Alaska. I made the mistake of asking what it was like spending months at a time in darkness. His reply, "Dark!!" He was very funny and we all enjoyed visiting with him. He left Saturday morning and was not able to join us at the banquet, but Katie Troccoli and Duke Boswell met a former Special Forces man, Gary Allen, on the elevator and he joined us. I asked Katie who he was and she said, "Ellen, don't you know I collect paratroopers?!" He fought with the 101st Airborne in Viet Nam and was very interesting. A fellow Texan from just down the road from me, he was in Seattle on business and just happened to be staying at our same hotel. He joined us in the hospitality room after the banquet and seemed to really enjoy visiting with some of the veterans.

At the Banquet, we did the annual candle lighting ceremony. Barbara Gavin Fauntleroy read the Paratroopers Prayer by Chappie Woods that Chaplain Jesse Crews had sent her, and Katie Troccoli read a beautiful prayer written by new Family and Friends member, Father Steve Jeselnick whom Katie and I met over in France during the celebrations last June.

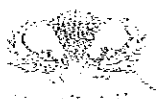
After the banquet, we all returned to the hospitality room and everyone had a wonderful time visiting with old friends and new ones. As usual, the reunion was over too soon. It was a lot of fun and I look forward to seeing everyone again in another year's time.

I would be remiss, if I did not mention Family and Friends member, Jean-Marie Lemoigne who traveled all the way from St. Mere Eglise. Jean-Marie is quite the historian and throughout the reunion, I would see him with different veterans huddled over maps and going over things. Katie and Duke stayed at Jean-Marie's home last summer along with F&F member, Barry O'Shea. One day, Jean-Marie took me and Katie and showed us where E Co. was dug in the night of D-Day. It was really a thrill for me, to be in the exact same location as my dear friends, Otis Sampson and John Perozzi.

My reunion photos can be seen at www.eeptx.phanfare.com.

Ellen Peters

MY HEROES



You have been sent 20 pictures.

020-Carl and Veronica Paul.JPG
021-Clarance and Evelyn Stoll.JPG
037-June and Pinky Pinkston.JPG
044-Katie Troccoli and Duke Boswell.JPG
053-John and Otis.JPG
085-Me at Ft. Lewis Museum - Photo by BF.JPG
059-Don McKeage.JPG
071-Barb Bugenig, Allan and Marilyn Barger, Shirley Grabner.JPG
109-Ralph Yeager.JPG
115-Christie and Roger Dinelt.JPG
117-Killer Barbaras!.JPG
122-Doc Franco.JPG
153-Kellet, Ed and Tracey.JPG

171-Bob Gillette with silk map of Sicily.JPG
173-Jean-Marie and Jan Silver.JPG
183-Maj. Duke Boswell and Maj. Mark Dotson.JPG
221-Veterans with Maj. Dotson.JPG
224-Bill Slawson playing the harmonica.JPG
226-The Franco Family.JPG
232-The Sampsons and the Perozzis.JPG

These pictures were sent with Picasa, from Google.
Try it out here: <http://picasa.google.com/>

commissioned to create the original statue.

After the museum visit, we boarded the bus once again and headed to McChord Air Force Base for the Memorial Luncheon. I became somewhat worried over Veteran Merv Shuman who seemed to be having more and more difficulties getting on and off that bus. I offered to get him a ride in one the cars. He refused saying, "I want to be with the guys!"

The luncheon was lovely. We had a nice Mediterranean buffet. Major Mark Dotson, Executive Officer of 3rd Brigade spoke to us. He had joined us at the hotel the previous evening.

After the luncheon, we headed to the Stryker Simulator Training Center. There we got to fire weapons at targets. On one side of the room, there were pop up targets such as one might see on a firing range. On the other side, there was an urban scene with bad guys popping up. I only fired my weapon once, but I hit the target. There were just too many great photo ops not to take advantage. And since it was all simulated, I was able to get in front of the shooters and really get some great shots of my own! I think a few of them may have fired a round or two at me, as I got in the way a couple of times, while taking pictures. I photographed 456th veteran, Ralph Yeager, standing up and firing his weapon. Across the way, his grandson, Jacob Collins, was firing from a sitting position. Husband and wife team, Christie and Roger Dinelt, were firing side by side, as were the two Barbaras, Barbara Sherer, daughter of Doc and Ilene Franco, and Barbara Fortenbaugh, daughter of Don McKeage. Even Doc Franco picked up a weapon and began firing.

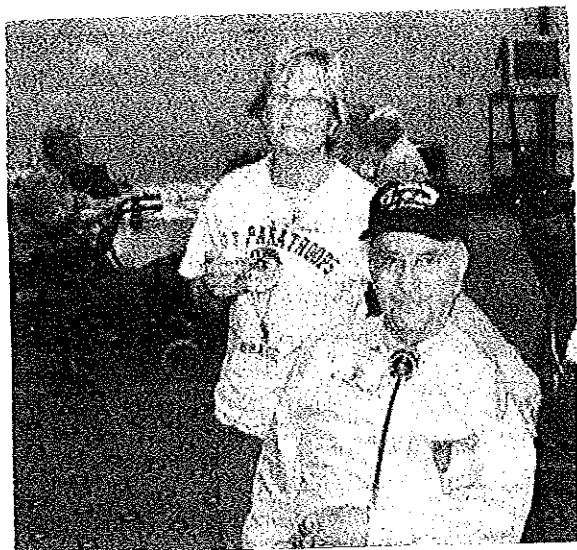
When we left the simulator building, they took us out and showed us an Infantry Carrier Vehicle. That thing was truly state of the art. It was incredible the equipment on that thing. It even had air conditioning! It had surveillance system that allowed them to see up to a mile and a half a way. The monitor looked like a flat screen TV. I was trying to pick up HBO!! It was amazing how they could zoom in on things in the far distance.

Our mortar men, John Perozzi, Otis Sampson, and Russ Brown really wanted to see a mortar. They didn't have any 60mm mortars like they fired in WWII, but they did manage to find a 120mm mortar. That thing was huge. Our guide explained all about it and the men were really interested in knowing all about it.

Finally, our day was over and we loaded the bus for one final time and headed back to the hotel. When we arrived, I went straight to the hospitality room and there was Buff. He had some family thing and wasn't able to come to Washington until Friday. It was sure good to see him and I scolded him for worrying me like that.

That evening I went to dinner with Ed Sayre and his great nephew, SFC Kellett Sayre, who is stationed at Ft. Lewis at present, and his lovely wife, Tracey. We went to a restaurant next door to the hotel. When we returned to the hospitality room, the "Veterans Forum" was in full swing. The Veteran's Forum is something we started doing last year at the Dayton, OH reunion. Any veteran who wants to can talk about their war time experiences. It was all very interesting and everyone got a lot out of it.

Over the course of the reunion, we managed to pick up a couple of stray paratroopers. Early on, Barbara Gavin Fauntleroy ran into a Sergeant Major Tim Williams who is from General Gavin's home town. He and Barbara met several years ago when he was involved in putting up a memorial to General Gavin and she came for the dedication. He knew General Gavin and said the general had said to him, "Go Airborne, young man!" We asked him and his buddy to join us in the hospitality room. He was on his way to Alaska, but



Duke + KATIE

From: Ellen Peters [mailto:eeptx@sbcglobal.net]
Sent: Friday, September 11, 2009 11:56 PM
To: 'Family and Friends of the 505 RCT'
Cc: 'dwmderby@pathway.com'
Subject: 2009 505th RCT Reunion



The 2009 505 RCT Reunion was a huge success. I believe everyone had a wonderful time I know I did. All the credit for the success of the reunion goes to our Family and Friends President, Bob Burns, who organized the entire reunion, and Barbara Franco Sherer who did a fantastic job with the hospitality room.

Jan Silver, Ed Sayre and I arrived on Tuesday. I wanted to arrive early, so I would have the opportunity to visit the Space Needle in Seattle. Wednesday morning, we met for breakfast and then took the bus to downtown Seattle. I had reserved a wheelchair for Ed (at 93, I thought he might need one), but in true Airborne fashion, he flat out refused to even let me take one with us in case he changed his mind. We arrived downtown and took the monorail over to the Space Needle where we road up to the top. The view from up there is truly spectacular and I took a bunch of photos.

We returned to the hotel in the afternoon. Some early reunion arrived shortly after our return. Carl and Veronica Paul arrived as did Clarence and Evelyn Stoll. A little while later, Don McKeage arrived with his two daughters Barbara Fortenbaugh and Mable Eckstorm. We all had a nice dinner together in the hotel.

On Thursday, reunion attendees began arriving in earnest. It was wonderful seeing old friends and meeting new ones. By early evening everyone had arrived except Buff Oldridge and I was starting to worry! Buff never misses a reunion.

Friday, we loaded up the bus and headed to Fort Lewis. Upon arrival, they ushered us into an auditorium and explained to us how the Stryker Brigades are operated. It was all very interesting. After the briefing, we boarded the bus again and were taken to the Ft. Lewis Museum. Now this was very interesting. They had stuff from every war our country has been in from the Civil War up to the present War on Terror. They had a bust of Saddam Hussein that was taken from a statue destroyed by engineers from Ft. Lewis. The remaining parts of the statue were melted down and re-cast into a memorial to the soldiers who lost their lives during combat operations. The really interesting thing is that the artisan who made the memorial is the same one Saddam Hussein had

Marie Callendar's was the best! Although I have picture proof Colleen's face lit up over the free candy at See's. The simulator firing was exciting and got the adrenalin going. I was a little rusty since my M16 days in the 70's, but I did OK.

But the best part as always is talking to everyone there, being part of an extended family. The hugs, the 'it's so good to see you again'; listening to the stories – laughing at the long johns, but crying inside for all the ones who never made it home to share their stories.

Looking forward to new memories next year at Bragg.

Barbara (McKeage) Fortenbaugh

Dear Veterans of the 505 and its Friends & Families,

Our reunion in Seattle and Ft. Lewis Washington was in my opinion a very rewarding experience .

Doc Franco and his families did a great job of organizing the activities for all of us to participate in the many functions we were privileged to see, and be a part of during the reunion.

Ellen Peters with help from her friend Jan Silver got us through all of the airports and as far as I know none of us got lost.

The tour of Ft. Lewis was most enlightening and gave all of us the opportunity to participate in the meetings and programs.

They certainly enhanced our awareness of all the accomplishments of the 505 in its many campaigns.

They gave all of us the feeling that the patriots of World War II is still with us and is appreciated by all of us.

Sincerely,

Ed Sayre

I want to thank everyone in the 505 and Family and Friends for making my first reunion so memorable. I can finally put faces to the names I've heard for so many years and some new names I've heard lately. I met so many wonderful people I can now understand the camaraderie the veterans and their families feel for one another. To think because of my father I am part of this elite group. I am very proud. Thank you dad for your years of service to our country and thank you for all the years you have been an active member of the 505 organization. No one can ever say you didn't give it your all. Thank you to all the officers and volunteers who worked so hard to pull everything together for the rest of us. The hospitality room, luncheon, banquet, and block party. Thank you sister Barbara for encouraging me to come with you and dad this year. I am hooked. I especially want to thank Barbara Sherer for driving dad and myself on Friday to all the functions. Hope to see you all at Ft Bragg next year. Mable Eckstorm, Family and Friends, proud daughter of Donald McKeage.

Time passes too quickly...the reunion has come and gone and we are left with pictures and memories. A heartfelt thank you to Bob Burns for all his work in planning and coordinating the reunion. A special thank you to Barbara Sherer for all her work, shopping, and taking care of the hospitality room. A special thank you to Ellen for her work throughout the year taking care of the finances for both organizations; and for her detailed post reunion report -- I can catch up on all the details I missed the first time. We have the greatest people between the two groups in this organization and I am proud to be associated with all of you.

My first 505 reunion was at Fort Benning in 1988. I already knew a lot of the people from either the 82d conventions or All American Week at Ft Bragg. But there were always new people to meet and look forward to seeing the next time. So many of the great troopers of the organization have gone on the their final DZ, leaving behind a legacy to be carried on by family and friends with a love and passion for the organization to keep their memory alive.

This reunion was special to me because my sister was able to get a glimpse of the camaraderie, to put faces with names, and to share the event with dad and I. Thanks for going Mab. I was so proud of dad for his bulldog determination to attend the reunion so soon after knee replacement surgery. He wasn't missing it for anything.

Mab and I shared a fun afternoon with Pinkston's, Ron & Colleen Smith & their extended family as we walked around the area for the block party and got free food. The free pie at

of the Bulge and the 3rd was made famous through the exploits of Audie Murphy in Italy, the most decorated soldier of WWII. The outdoor exhibition featured a variety of armored cars, tanks, howitzers and anti-tank gun as well as anti-aircraft displays. Most agreed that at least another hour was needed to get the full effect of what was on display.

A Visit to the Stryker Simulator facility allowed the WWII veterans to fire modern day weaponry and to see, through virtual magic, how the streets of Baghdad are patrolled and bad guys blasted away.

Veterans and their family and friends also has the chance to sit in the Stryker vehicles, which have been specially outfitted with metal, cage- like barriers, to fend of IED blasts that have killed and wounded so many in lightly armored Humvees in the War on Terror in Afghanistan and Iraq. Tour guides included Stryker Brigade soldiers who have lost limbs but not their will to survive and thrive in today's Army.

Under deadline pressure and working from memory, I'm sure I left out some names of deserving troopers who made the effort to cross country and be amongst the Best of the Best.

I would be remiss without thanking Ellen Peters and Katie Troccoli for making my job easier, and Barbara "Franco" Sheerer, whose vision and hard work made for a well- stocked and visually pleasing Hospitality Room. A special shout out to Jan Silver who always pitches in where needed, who usually says "yes" before she even thinks about saying no.

Airborne ATW!!

Bob Burns, President

FF505RCT ASSN



PRESIDENT'S REPORT...505 Reunion near Ft. Lewis, Wa.

The 505RCT reunion in Tacoma was another success with more than 60 attendees of which 18 were WWII veterans of the 505RCT. The West Coast location brought out some who we hadn't seen in a while including Duke Boswell (G Co), Bob Gillette (Rgt.HHC) and Bob Slawson and his wife. Bob was one of the Devil's Brigade(First Special Forces) troopers who volunteered to join the 82nd Airborne(B Co 505) when his outfit was disbanded late 1944-- and he looked especially fit and sharp in his 1945 Eisenhower jacket and bloused pants, sporting all his fruit-salad.

A Company's Richie Reyes was another fresh face who told me about his assignment to scrounge for supplies off the downed gliders to supply the troopers defending the Lafiere Bridgehead area west of Ste Mere Eglise, especially using his swimming ability to get to those CG4-A Wacos that landed in the flooded areas. Platoon Sergeant Karl Paul and his wife came in from Idaho with plans to go on to Holland. He made a great contribution with his "war memories" at our veteran's forum Friday night.

It was great to see, again, vets whose birthday milestones will be 100, 90+ warriors like COL Ed Sayre(Ret.)(A Co), Robert (Doc) Franco(505 medics) and Otis Sampson(E Co) who lauded his mates from E...John Perozzi and Mervyn Schulman—who like a great trooper made it up and down the tour bus steps eight times, refusing an easier car ride because he wanted to ride the bus with his buddies.

F Company had youngster (84) Don McKeage, 'Canuck 'Buff Oldridge and Russ Brown to represent them. And Allen Barger represented his D Company comrades.

Congratulations to Duane "Pinky" Pinkston (C Co) who was elected president of the 505RCT group. When past president Don McKeage, who served his comrades so well, decided he needed some relief, Pinky answered the call of "Medic" just as he had done during his campaign in Europe 65 years ago. Doc Franco continues as vice president, Barbara Fortenbaugh as asst VP, Ellen Peters as Sec-Treas, Don McKeage as director/Panther Editor, Ed Sayre as director in charge of research, Ted Gaweda, Liaison to the 505RCT at Ft. Bragg, Chaplain Jesse Crews, Trustees Dave Bullington and Bob Gillette, and John Sparry as Webmaster.

The Family & Friends group re-elected Bob Burns, president, Katie Dumke Troccoli, VP, Ellen Peters, Sec-Treas., and trustees Gene Garren, Barbara Gavin Fauntleroy and Jim Blankenship. Also re-elected was Ray Fary, veteran's liaison. Duke Boswell was unanimously elected as the new 4-year trustee.

Two important decisions were made at the BoD and General Meeting... to return next year's reunion to Ft. Bragg and to begin to raise money to emplace monuments to the 505RCT KIAs in all the countries where the major campaign were fought. Presently, such memorials only exist in Belgium. Italy, France Holland and Germany are all future overseas projects.

Business aside, the trip to Fort Lewis and McChord AFB was enlightening and enjoyable. The Museum at Ft. Lewis was extensive, with indoor displays depicting the Lewis & Clark expeditions, the founding of Ft. Lewis, uniforms, equipment and weaponry on display from WWI, WWII. Korea and beyond as Ft. Lewis was home to storied Infantry Divisions like the 2nd and 3rd ID. The 2nd fought a terrific action in the Battle

2009 Reunion 505 RCT Association Ft Lewis, Wa. Reunion Began and ended on a great note. First to arrive at the Marrett court yard Hotel Ed Sayre. Ellen Peters and Jan silva. After site seeing for a day; they were joined by Carl and Vera Paul; the Shalls; Don McKeage and two daughters. On Thursday arrivals increased and The hospital Room sprang to life. Friday was a long and excited day. Buses took the group to Ft. Lewis where we were greeted by Major Mark Dotem from Ft. Bragg, Nc. We got a History of Ft. Lewis and the Mission of the Stryker Brigade. Next day was Ft Lewis Museum. Where US Military History well placed. Of Saddam Hussen, he was captured by troops from Ft Lewis was on display. Half of it had melted down and made into Memorial Plaque in memorial of troops lost in combat the Memorial Luncheon celebrated at near by McCord Air Force Base. Bob Burns and Barb Gavin read names of troops KIA previous Yr. And candles were lighted. Next activity was the Stryker Training center. Stationery and moving targets were available. A few laughs resulted from this activity. We then moved on to check on the new INF Vehicle. Very impressive troop carrier. Strong armour to protect tires and sides of a heavy steel. Top speed 65 MPH.

The Saturday night Banquet was its usual up-beat. Lively function. Candle lighting was performed. That made the veterans from earlier in the day very Happy. Modesty was on hold for this session. The Final our in the Hospitality room ended the reunion. Special Guest included SFC Kellet Sayres and his wife Sgt Sayres is on active duty at Ft. Lewis. He was very helpful in procuring needed items. Major Tim Lillens from Gavinsome Town Missing was in blankenship. Wife had heart Surgery. Barbara Sherer filled in for Jim and did well; with helpers. Dr Robert Franco



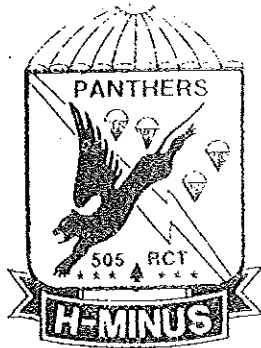
CARL & VERA PAUL



CLARENCE & EVELYN STOLL



505 PIR.



82nd A/B Div.

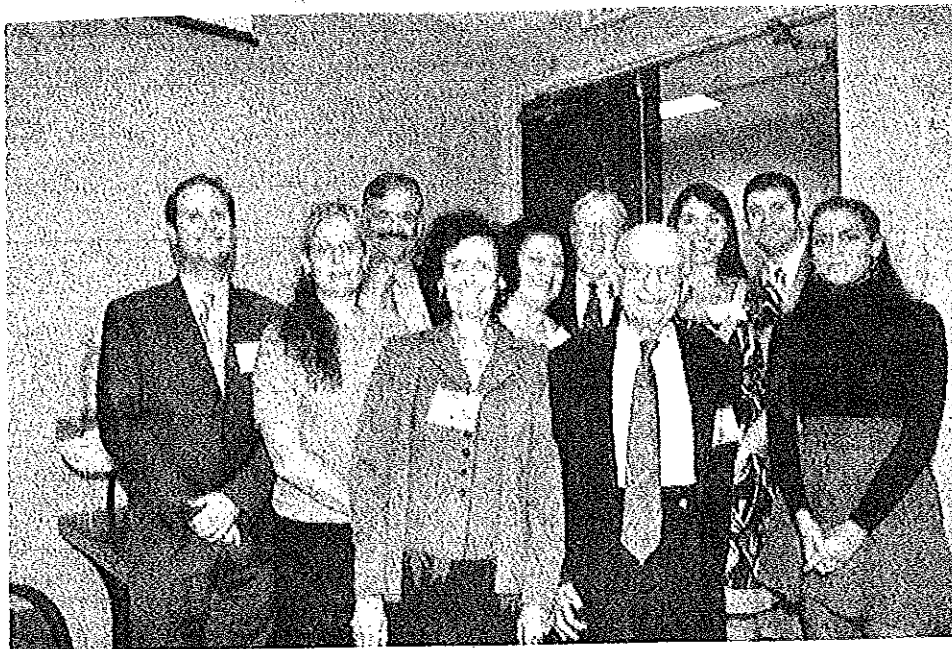
505th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



Mr. Duaine Pinkston
1398 Knoll Rd.
Portland, MI 48875-9763



Dear Don : anything you want to add or delete; feel free. It was great to meet with the Veterans of the 505 Rct Along with the families and friends of the 505 Thursday was registration and visiting. Friday we Tured Ft. Lewis and a Museum. There was a Memorial Luncheon at McChord AFB From there we Visited the stryer area at Ft. Lewis. I N the evening Veterans were encouraged to relate some of their war Experiences. Saturday was spent in the hospitality room Until Banquet time. M ajor Mark Dotson Executive Officer of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team; was our speaker On a personal note, it was a good reunion. The 505 Always did have class. Many thanks to Dr. Franco's Family and anyone else who helped make this reunion A success.
President duane Pinkson With 1st Lady June



DR. FRANCO

Φ FAMILY