



THE LIBERATOR™

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14th Armored Division Association

SPRING 2015

Message from our President



Lawrence "Larry" Miller

Did we ever think we would make it to our 50th reunion? Well, we did! And what a wonderful time we had visiting and sharing stories. The trip around Milwaukee was great, and the entertainment was good. I know we all went through a terrible time at Hatten and Ritterhoffen - it's a wonder anyone got out alive. I know God had to have been with us. I want to say thank you for being elected as your President for 2015 of our Association. But now, let's turn our attention to Sioux Falls, South Dakota!

Sincerely, Lawrence Miller

The 51st Annual Reunion in Sioux Falls, South Dakota! September 17-20, 2015

We are traveling to Sioux Falls, SD, for our 51st Annual Reunion September 17-20, 2015! A wonderful reunion is being planned that will allow us a chance to see the beautiful city of Sioux Falls, spend more time in our lovely hotel visiting with friends and family, and have a totally restful gathering! We will stay at the ClubHouse Hotel and Suites, which features free wireless and internet access throughout the hotel, an indoor children's water playland and whirlpool spa, beautiful sun deck / terrace and gazebo, free parking. Pets are welcome!

Coffee and wine shops are located right in front of the hotel.

We will help in any way we can! The hotel shuttle will meet you at Sioux Falls Regional Airport, and we will meet you at the hotel door! We will park your car, help with registration, taking luggage to your room and unpacking, if you wish. We are the 'Partners' - children and grandchildren of veterans who love to share your reunions!

Reunion planning is still underway! We're booking another bus tour of our reunion city! Tours

(Continued on page 3)

PAST PRESIDENT FRED HARSHBERGER DIES



Just two months after presiding as president of the 14th Armored Division Association at the reunion in Milwaukee, Fred Harshberger, 92, passed away on November 21, 2014. He died at the Western Maryland Regional Medical Center near his home in Cumberland, MD.

A longtime life member of the 14th AD Association, Fred had many comrades and friends who he enjoyed visiting with at reunions. During WWII, Fred served in Hdq. Co. of the 62nd AIB as a member of the assault gun crew.

Graduating from high school in 1939, Fred was drafted into the Army

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51st NATIONAL REUNION

Sioux Falls ClubHouse Hotel & Suites - Sept. 17-20, 2015

**FROM THE LADIES
AUXILIARY PRESIDENT**



GAYLE SIEWERT

GREETINGS FROM MINNESOTA!

What a great time we had in Milwaukee, but was disappointing that so few could join us. We sure missed all the friendly faces and hope everyone is in good health and can join us at this next reunion.

The hospitality room was well used and our raffle was a great success. We raised \$500.00 which will be going to the National VFW Children's Home, which was President Fred Harshberger's choice.

The ladies' meeting was put on hold as we didn't have a quorum to hold any business. It was suggested to temporarily suspend the bylaws until next year. We appointed a chair and co-chair for reunion functions which Karen McCallister volunteered for. She is designated chair and I will serve as co-chair.

Congratulations to all the new men's officers. Please check The Liberator for a listing of names. The women will hold the same offices until our next meeting.

Next year's reunion will be in Sioux Falls, South Dakota but at this writing the dates have not been announced. Information regarding this will appear in The Liberator when available.

Please remember to contribute to the Liberator postage fund if you are able to do so. Send change of addresses to Ann Chelette. Thank you to all who help keep our organization functioning. Enjoy the rest of the winter months and I will look forward to seeing you all in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

Sincerely,
Gayle Siewert

Honorary National President
MAJOR GEN. A. C. SMITH, USA-Deceased

Honorary National President
LT. COL. ANDREW W. WINIARCZYK, USA-Deceased

★ ★ ★ **LIBERATOR** ★ ★ ★

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PLEASE FILL IN ALL BLANKS

Enclosed is \$3.00. Please enroll me as a member of the 14th Armored Division Assn., Inc. Auxiliary.
Check One of the following: New Member Renewal Life Membership \$30.00

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Husband's Name _____ Tel. No. _____

Please make checks payable to: National Women's Auxiliary
of the 14th Armored Division Ass'n.

Sioux Falls, South Dakota...

(continued from page 1)

of Milwaukee, Peoria, and Indianapolis have been wonderful opportunities to look around at the amazing reunion cities and to spend time with friends! We'll have more goings-on in the hotel for anyone interested and a long list of Sioux Falls attractions (including the waterfalls!) for anyone who wants to get out and about!

Our Hospitality Room will be ready for you on **Thursday, September 17**, with snacks and beverages, archives and historical documents, and a place to sit and relax together. Gayle Siewert and the ladies of the Auxiliary will welcome you to your 'home away from home' in Sioux Falls. Our ladies sponsor the raffle in Hospitality Room to provide their annual donation to a veteran's facil-

ity of the President's choosing.

Most meals will be in our hotel, as usual! A hot breakfast buffet is free to us each morning from 6:00 - 10:00 am! Delicious lunches and dinners are another chance to be together. Our meals are always great times to gather with friends! The hotel is connected to a restaurant for your enjoyment, as well.

Annual events will include our business meetings of the Board on **Thursday afternoon, September 17**. On **Friday, September 18**, a City Bus Tour & other activities are being finalized. Dinner will be at 6 p.m.

Business meetings for the Association, the Ladies Auxiliary, and the Partners will be **Saturday, September 19**. Our Memorial Service will be held at 10:00 a.m. that Saturday morning and our Worship Service at 9:00 a.m. on **Sunday, Sep-**

tember 20.

Saturday's Reunion Banquet will include the concluding remarks by President Larry Miller and the oath of office for all Association and Auxiliary officers. President Elect Phil Snoberger becomes our new Association President.

New this year will be a photo shop for individuals, families, and friends to have their pictures taken and printed; Liberator gifts for all in attendance; and a drawing open to all veterans present (plus those hoping to join us next year) for free reunion registration at our 52th Annual Reunion in Indiana!

Join us in Sioux Falls, SD!

Call A if you w union! We can arrange and for you!

14th Armored Division Association Creed

The purposes and objectives of the 14th Armored Division Association shall be to perpetuate the memory of those who fought and served in the 14th Armored Division - the "Liberators."

- To pay special tribute to those of our comrades who made the ultimate sacrifice by giving their lives while in the service of their country.
- To foster and promote a spirit of patriotism in all Americans, so that the heroic exploits of our dedicated comrades-in-arms will never be forgotten.
- To honor those men, who wore with pride the emblem of the 14th Armored Division, the division that history has recognized as the division that fought one of the greatest defensive battles of World War II.
- To cultivate a spirit of comradeship and brotherly love among the members of this association, as well as those who

support our efforts.

- To ever respect and protect our country's flag, and to uphold and abide by the constitution of the United States of America.

In affirmation of the above, we offer our thanks to God for His blessings and guidance, in the past, at this time, and in the future.

50th REUNION BANQUET

Remarks by Outgoing President Fred Harshberger:

"Serving our country in a time of crisis was a calling and a duty, and to have been President of the 14th Armored Division Association this past year has been an honor and a privilege. Thank all of you for your kindness and your friendship. A special thanks to Ann and Jess for all your hard work putting these reunions together, and to Verlyn Hofer for editing our Liberator magazine."

Tonight I Got My Orders

by T/5 Russell Bracco
84th Armored MED BAT Co B

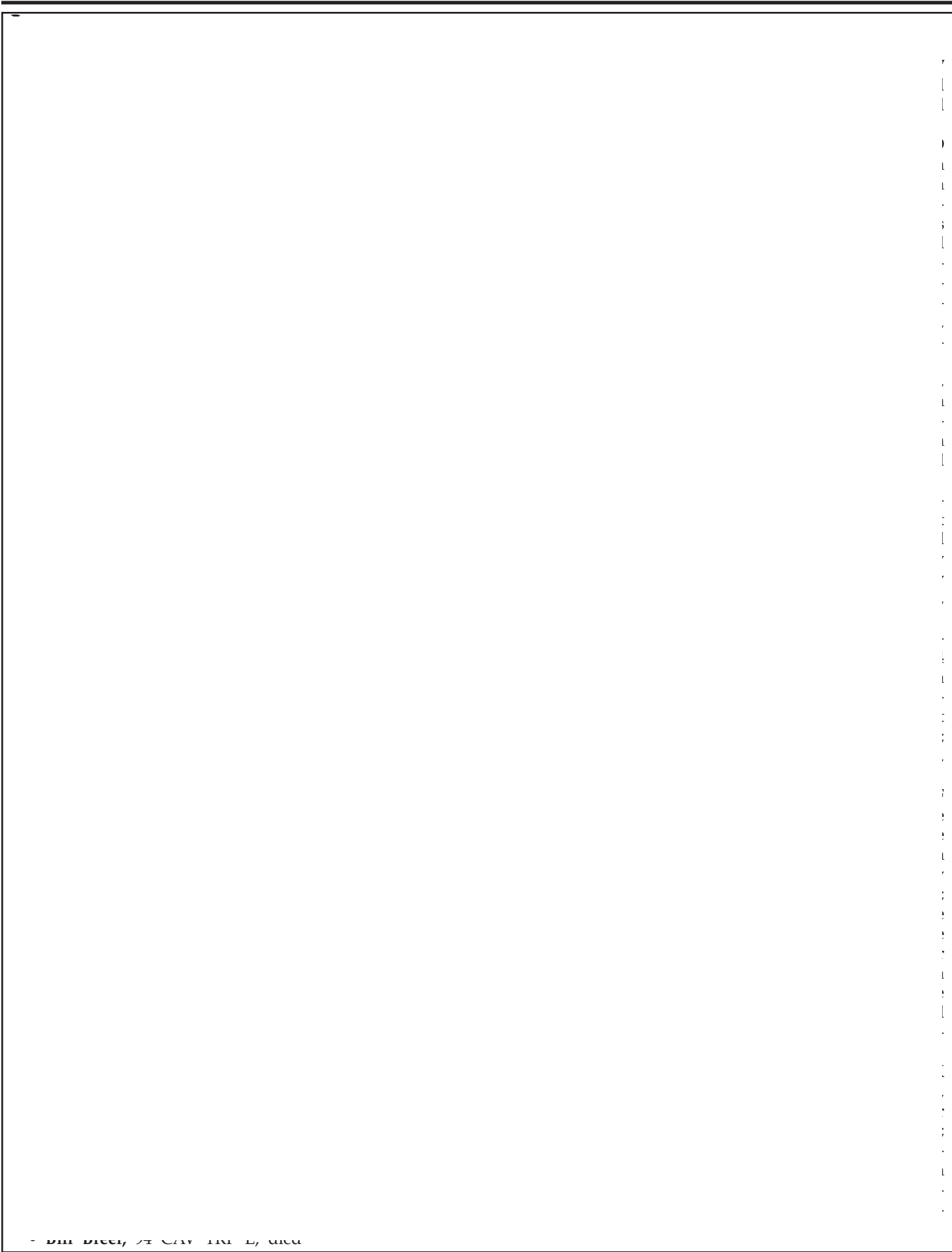
Excerpt pages 101-103

"Saturday, April 28, 1945: Boy oh boy, I almost froze to death last night. It was too cold to get up for breakfast so I remained in my bedroll till inspection, 7:45 am. Met numerous boys from Div. Very much surprised to meet Michael Donovan, a boy who attended Ft. Knox Comm School with me. He's now a rifleman with the 19th Inf, wounded twice, first time as the exact day Huber was hit at Hatten. Saturday night wrote a letter to Mom and Girl.

"Sunday, April 29, to Friday, May 4, 1945: Almost a whole week has gone by since I last wrote anything in this diary. It has been the most eventful week I've ever spent. It's a long story, and I'm going to try and jot down just about everything.

"Sunday morning at 6:45 am, Sarg took roll call and the next minute we found ourselves well on our way. Loaded in huge Army Troop carriers, about 30 to a truck. We traveled south along the Rhine River Valley, the further south we went the colder it got; the rea-

(Continued on page 27)



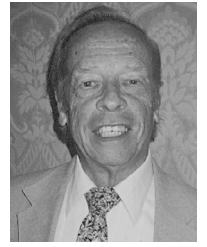
THE DIRECTOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA



THE CHAPLAIN'S COMMENTS

John A. Burgess

GIVING HELP



Members of the 14th Armored Division are growing older. Decisions are to be made as to what to do during this period of life. Mark 5:19 gives a possible suggestion. A former demon possessed man healed by Jesus offered to travel with Jesus. Jesus said to him; "Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you and how he has had mercy on you."

Jesus is suggesting that the man's main responsibility is to his family. Romans 13:10 tells us to "love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other." We, the members of the 14th, have retired and can select some of our daily activities. I consider this one of the best periods of my life. Now I can devote time to meeting the needs of my

family or other people I meet during the day. Meeting the needs of members of your family is your task for each day. I have fourteen grandchildren, several of them are in college, I write to them often and send them a gift.

There are some of your neighbors who have needs. Be aware of these and help where you can. There are also members of the 14th who have needs. Let other members of the 14th know of members who have needs. When I was a child there was a deacon in our church who made it his objective to visit every member of the church. That way he noticed many of the needs others had and was able to meet some and tell others who could help meet some of those needs as well. Even a person confined to home can serve such as

a woman did who was confined to her bed. She prayed fervently for others, was an encouragement for them, and met as many needs as she could. People were always uplifted when they visited her.

We members of the 14th are far from each other but we can reach each other by mail, e-mail, or a variety of other ways. When you know of a Liberator who would be encouraged by a call, e-mail or letter, notify me or *The Liberator*, so that many of us might respond. God put us on this earth to help take care of his children. We who have come through so much are called to be an encouragement wherever we can. God Bless You.

Dr. Rev. John A. Burgess
National Chaplain

50th Annual Reunion Attendance

Veterans noted in **BOLD** print.

Burmeister, Albert & Millie,
48 Tank Co B

DeBoer, Twila,
widow of **Charles DeBoer**
19 AIB Co C

DeBoer, Bruce & Kathy
Rebelein, Verlyn & Charlotte

Goldman, Stanley,
62 AIB Co A

Harshberger, Fred,
62 INF Hq Co
Harvey, Jack & Terry

Hurl, Chuck & Betty,
25 Tank Co B
Prunty, Bill & Cindy
Hurl, Bob & Alex
Vrtis, Kenneth & Jeanette

Klobucar, John & Laverne,
19 AIB Co A

McAllister, Merlin & Sylvia,
94 CAV B Trp
McAllister, Don & Karen

McClarren, Bob
25 Tank Co D
Wilson, Carol Lynnc**Keague, Robert**
& Marianne,
94 CAV F Trp

Meyer, Herman & Mary,
136 ORD Co C

Miller, Lawrence
19 AIB Co C
Miller, Rusty
Nordtrom, Eric
Trim, Rick

Grandsons of **Chester R. West**
501 ARTY Bty A
Oester, Mark & Tammy
Bechen, Nancy
Children of **Lee Oester**,
62 INF HQ Co

Procuniar, Major Ginny,
Daughter of **John Donahey**
19 AIB HW Co

Roberts, Roy & Christine
47 TANK Co A
Chelette, Ann & Jess
Mason, Chris
Gaskell, Jill & Vivian

Ross, Elton & Marge
48 TANK Co D
Ross, Brad
Siewert, Gayle
Daughter of **Bill H. Siewert**
62 INF Co C

Snoberger, Phil
68 IND HQ Co



****God Bless****
AMERICA

Love Arising From War

Adapted from a story written by Karen Elechko - 1 June 2013

Submitted by Ingeborg Darlington.
Reprinted from *The Sixteener*, 16th AD
Association newsletter.

Cameras capture moments in our lives, scenes that last for the seconds of the shutter's opening. In the case of 96 year-old U.S. Army WWII Veteran, Homer Darlington and his 88 year-old wife, Ingeborg, however, a camera became a bridge to a future that neither could have imagined.

The story of Ingeborg, Homer and the camera begins at the conclusion of WWII when Homer, a young GI from West Chester, PA found himself in a small town in today's Czech Republic. There Ingeborg and her mother were living in a small room, refugees from the heavily bombed German capital, Berlin.

The area was occupied by American troops. To his delight, while exploring the homelike area, found a children's playground, where a young girl brought several children daily. He tried to converse with the young woman who refused to acknowledge him, referring to him as "the enemy."

Ultimately, Homer pulled out of his pocket, a small New Testament and read: Matthew 5:44 "But I say unto you love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them who despitefully use you, and persecute you." Ingeborg challenged him to set the ex-

ample.

Her mother was impressed by the quote from the scripture and suggested Ingeborg invite the American to dinner. Their fare was simple: potato pancakes made from three potatoes and an egg her mother had brought home the previous day while begging for food at farms in the vicinity of the town. Added was some potato starch found in an abandoned freight train. The potato pancakes were fried in cod liver oil, the woman's only supply of oil given to Ingeborg for medicinal purposes. Homer pronounced the meal as "the best" he had eaten and was touched by the woman's hospitality.

He further learned that Ingeborg, who had given her age as fifteen, was actually twenty years old. They were struggling to survive. When Ingeborg's father died, his beloved camera was given to her by her mother. Facing yet another uprooting in the war, Ingeborg expressed concern about the safety of this one reminder of happier days and asked that Homer take the camera with him. He promised to send it back when they were able to return to their home and addresses were exchanged.

Soon thereafter he left Germany and returned to West Chester. By a sheer miracle (The Lord provided) mother and daughter fled across the border to Germany. Again, they found themselves living in a small room, struggling for food and necessities. In-

geborg managed to communicate with Homer, now a teacher. He assured her of the camera's safety and regularly sent her care packages.

After about two years of letters and packages, Homer found the courage to tell Ingeborg that she should have the camera now... but in the United States, not Germany! Homer offered to send her a ticket to America, not only to retrieve the camera, but more significantly... to marry him! After much thought and prayer, Ingeborg agreed and came to Pennsylvania to a warm welcome from Homer's family.

In the years that followed, Ingeborg and Homer became the parents of three daughters who, in turn, have blessed them with nine grandchildren and fifteen great-grandchildren. Ties to Ingeborg's mother, who remained in Germany, were close until her death.

Further enriching the lives of this remarkable couple was their outreach to foster children. While raising their own family they extended their love and support to more than a hundred foster children, some of whom remain like family to Ingeborg and Homer. They describe their life partnership as outstanding and remain deeply in love. Her father's camera now sits on a shelf and no longer snaps photos, but no picture could possibly capture the beauty of the story of Ingeborg and Homer, of love arising from war.



Past President Fred Pieper Passes

Fred Pieper, 92, of Tama, passed away Sunday, Sept. 21, 2014, in Tama, IA. After high school he entered Iowa State College in Ames, but stopped to enlist in World War II in December 1942. He served in the 48 TANK HQ CO until discharge January 1946 as a sergeant.

He married Helen Kelly that December and returned to college, graduating with a degree in vocational agriculture. After 25 years selling Farm Bureau Insurance, he and Hel-

en opened their own business, Pieper Insurance and Real Estate in 1973.

Fred was a frequent lector at St. Patrick's Catholic church. He was a member of Kiwanis and the American Legion. He was active in the 14th Armored Division Midwest reunions and served as president for the Cedar Rapids national reunion.

Fred loved the outdoors, including trout fishing in northeastern Iowa and hunting in Tama County with his sons for pheasants, rabbit and duck. During the summer he was busy growing fruit and vegetables in his backyard.

Lt. Col. Edwin Ferris Lived Long, Interesting Life of Service

The following article was compiled and submitted by Elton Ross who served under Lt. Col. Ferris as a member of Co. D, 48th Tank Bn.

Lt. Col. Edwin H. Ferris was the 48th Tank Bn commander from Camp Chaffee, AR thru the time his tank was hit by two anti-tank projectiles at Barr, France 28 Nov 44. He was interviewed for the Veterans History Project as many of us have been, at San Antonio, Texas. The interviewer was Michael Black and also present were two of his four sons Patrick and Timothy. They aided their dad's memory on occasions. Lt. Col. Ferris was just shy of 100 years of age at the time. Phil Rood, Lt. Col. Ferris's grandson by marriage, supplied me with the full interview of which I have selected the following excerpts that I felt would be of particular interest to our members.

Lt. Col. Ferris was born 19 April 1912 when his dad was 72 years of age and was a former member of Morgan's Confederate Raiders in the Civil War. He died a few years later. As a child, during WWI, Lt. Col. Ferris had a battle ground in the next door vacant lot. When 10 years of age, he met his to be love of his life, Marie, in the Catholic Grade School. They married immediately after he graduated from West Point and they enjoyed 74 years of marriage.

Upon graduating from West Point, he was assigned to the 1st (Big Red One) Infantry Division stationed at Governors Island, NY and a lot of their training was done at Ft. Dix, NJ. He served at several locations including Ft. Lewis, Wash. In the early 1940s, he was sent to Ft. Knox's Armor School. Upon graduating, he was assigned as

the 48th Tank Bn of the newly formed 14th Arm'd Div at Camp Chaffee, Ark as Bn Commander and served in that position until he was severely wounded at Barr, France 28 Nov 44. A few days before that a couple of sniper bullets entered his clothing, but no mention of wounds.

After the sniper bullets on 28 Nov, he was near the front of the column entering the supposedly peaceful Barr, France, when his tank was hit by two anti-tank gun projectiles. One severely fractured his left leg tibia and some damage to his right leg. The other projectile killed a Lt. in the tank. His gunner Sgt. Kiley literally heaved him out of the burning tank and managed to get him to a nearby basement after he had applied a tourniquet to the severally injured leg. The house was the German Headquarters. A German medic immediately went to work on Lt. Col. Ferris. In the meantime, a boy of the house went to get the local doctor, Dr. Krieg, who took over. The Germans left in about three days. Lt. Col. Ferris was hauled to the local hospital in a wagon or wheel barrow. In the hospital were German, French, and American patients and you could say prisoners until the GIs arrived again. Lt. Col. Ferris was put on a fast track to Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, DC. For over two years, they worked to correct his severe wound and administering rehabilitation. His right leg had healed well.

He was asked, after 67 years, who he remembered. Two names came to mind; Lt. Kaufman, who was killed by one of the projectiles and Sgt. Kiley, his gunner, who heaved him out of the tank and applied the tourniquet. Lt. Col. Ferris and some of his family

went back to Barr, France years later and were able to find the house he was dragged to which contained the German Hdqrs. The same family occupied (no doubt the boys) the house and they remembered him. They immediately summoned Dr. Krieg and the mayor of Barr, France. The celebration then started with Dr. Krieg saying "vous etes mort" (you are dead). I think he probably said "vous ne estes mort" or you are not dead.

After Walter Reed, he served in the military in Washington in some kind of intelligence work; retiring in 1949. He then went to work for the CIA as an Intelligence Officer in Central Intelligence and was sent to Greece for three years when there was a lot of turmoil over there. He stayed with the CIA for 11 years. He was still staying connected to his beloved military by becoming an instructor of military science, English, and mathematics at St. Johns High School, a military school. He retired from St. Johns High School in Washington, DC in 1975 after teaching 15 years and settled in San Antonio, Texas.

So I think from this extensive interview, Lt. Col. Ferris always had God and country in his life. He lived a full 99 years of life serving in the military at West Point, in two divisions, and Washington, DC. Add to that the CIA and teaching in the military school. In addition, and I am sure with encouragement, some of his sons and grandson have served or are serving in the military.

The original interview was 35 pages long, but, I have picked what I consider most of his early and military life.

– Elton C. Ross

PAST PRESIDENT FRED HARSHBERGER DIES...

(Continued from page 21)

and then was selected for the ASTP program at Princeton University where he studied engineering. He then went back to serve in the Army as a member of the 14th Armored Division. Along with his unit, Fred helped liberate many prisoners of war and

those held in concentration camps. In civilian life, Mr. Harshberger was associated with the Hiser Supply Co. for over 30 years. He was a member of the Melvin United Methodist Church where he taught Sunday School and was a Gold Star Member. He was a member of various veterans' organizations and had the distinction of being the oldest member of the High Ridge Hunting Club. As a hobby, Fred sold

real estate and was an avid hunter and fisherman.

Fred was preceded in death in 2005 by his wife of 56 years, Maxine, as well as his parents and siblings. He is survived by two sons and two daughters, as well as their spouses and a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

The Army chose Kohl before he could choose it.

Editor's Note: The following account of Charles Kohl's Army career is reprinted from a story which appeared in the York (Nebraska) News Times. Other men of Co. C, 136th Ordinance Bn. no doubt shared many of these experiences with Charles "Guy" Kohl.

YORK - About a year after attempting to enlist in the Air Force, Charles Guy Kohl was drafted into the Army.

On Nov. 13, 1941 - Kohl's 18th birthday and less than a year after graduating from high school in Hastings, - Kohl's father thwarted his attempt to enlist in the U.S. Air Force during World War II.

"My father wouldn't sign the papers and told me they would call me when I was needed," Kohl added.

Kohl was called to arms shortly after his 19th birthday and less than a month after marrying Betty Lou Busboom on Nov. 4, 1942. His orders were to report to Fort Crook in Omaha for a physical, where his biggest obstacle was the eye exam.

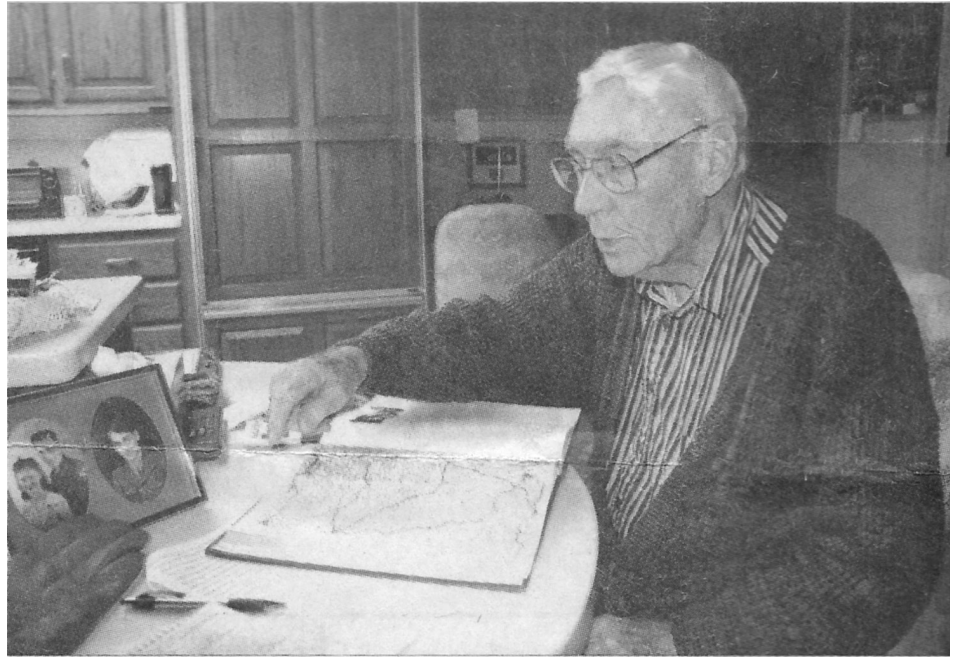
I had worn glasses since I was seven years old and had 20/400 vision," Kohl added.

While waiting in line, Kohl memorized the chart's small lines. So, when he handed his glasses to one of the examiners, Kohl was able to read the smallest letters by memory. Even though the examiners suspected they were bested, they allowed Kohl to go forward in the physical.

Kohl returned home to Hastings for about a week before reporting to Fort Dodge, Iowa, on Feb. 4, 1943. From there he went to Fort Knox, KY, for armored basic training.

"My wife joined me about six weeks later, rooming in Elizabethtown, KY," Kohl added.

It was her first time away from Hastings, besides for brief visits to Burwell to visit her grandmother. Upon the completion of basic training, the men had to go on a 20-mile forced march with a full pack and a rifle while running and walking the whole way.



Charles Guy Kohl looks through the "History of the 14th Armored" while reminiscing about his time in the U.S. Army.

"When we were finished after a full day, I asked my 1st Sergeant for a pass to go to town to see my wife," Kohl said. "He said, 'Kohl, if you have enough energy, I will give you the pass. I then walked to the main gate and got a ride to town with an officer.'"

He received another physical after basic training where he did not have the opportunity to memorize the letters on the chart.

"I didn't get to see the eye chart and couldn't read anything but the largest letters and was put in limited service," Kohl added.

Limited service meant soldiers were not put on the front lines. Kohl ended up in the officers' mess hall, pulling kitchen patrol. Soon after, Kohl learned of an Army specialist program for which he applied and passed.

The program sent him to Ohio State University for three weeks where the Army housed him in the Buckeye Club inside the stadium.

"They ran us up and down the seats every day for exercise," Kohl said.

Before being sent to New York University, his paternal grandmother passed away. The Army provided him with a 3-day pass to attend the funeral. When he returned, he found out his

company had already shipped out.

While waiting orders, he found himself volunteering to donate blood and to make a box overlay for the Reserve Officer Training Corps.

"Finally, I received orders to go to North Central College, in Naperville, IL, where I spend about three months before the program was discontinued and I was sent to Camp Wolters, TX," he said.

While there, he was assigned to the desert to help train medics. Kohl found himself daubing fake blood on a few men and setting off a stick of dynamite. After which, the medics would rush in and bandage the wounds.

Somewhere along the way, Kohl lost his limited service rating and was sent to Camp Chaffee, AR., near Fort Smith and became a member of C Company, 136 Ordinance Maintenance Battalion, 14th Armored. After arriving on Oct. 31, 1943, they noticed he had yet to take a furlough.

"The 14th was going on winter maneuvers in Tennessee right away, but they gave me five days to go home," Kohl added. "I was there for my first anniversary."

When he returned to camp on Nov. 6, he met Walt Jungst, Kohl's best friend for the rest of the war and long-

(Continued on page 9)

ARMY CHOSE KOHL...

(Continued from page 8)

time friend thereafter.

From Nov. 1943 to Feb. 1944, the 14th Armored Division was on winter maneuvers. By the end, the unit moved to Camp Campbell, KY, near the Cumberland Mountains. The army promoted Kohl to a T4, a rank for men trained in technical specialties like mechanics and radio men, after they learned of experience in machine repair.

"I went from \$50 base pay to \$78 in about three months," Kohl said.

While at Camp Campbell, Kohl volunteered to go to machinist school at Fort Knox. At machinist school, he learned to use the metal shaper, lathe, turn brake drums, reline brake shoes and fit brakes to the drums.

"At the end of the class we took a test," Kohl said. "I complained to the sergeant that he had misread an I for a J and he said no one had ever aced this test so I didn't either.

When he returned to his unit, many men were rated which meant even those with a T4 ranking had to pull guard duty. They had the day to prepare for inspection where he would press his Olive Drabs with pleats in the shirt, polish his boots, bleach his leggings and clean his rifle.

"They would pick a jeep driver for the officer of the day and a super numerary (a fill-in) who got an extra weekend day off," Kohl added.

Kohl fondly remembers only having to walk the post, the perimeter of the area, once during his time at Camp Campbell. He said the infraction was due to an officer noticing he had too much oil on his rifle.

After earning a long weekend, Kohl took a bus to Hastings and brought Betty Lou back to Hopkinsville, to be near until he received his orders to ship out. At the time, she contributed to the war effort by working in Hastings at Dutton-Lainson, a naval munitions depot that made artillery shells.

"The ration board said they would give me enough stamps to get to Kentucky, but not back," he said. It was not a problem - I went to the base ra-

tions board and they gave me whole sheet."

He said his wife did not drive yet, so his mother and father took a train to Mexico, MO., to pick up Betty Lou. Kohl said his parents' journey from Hastings to Missouri was a unique one. They were loaded onto a train with employees leaving the Hastings Munitions Depot which had suffered many casualties after an accidental explosion.

"I drove there and they told me goodbye in St. Louis at the bus depot," he added.

Before shipping out to France, Kohl's unit underwent yet another physical.

"I couldn't read the chart without my glasses," Kohl said. "Again the one looking at my glasses wanted to stop me, but the other one said let him join his outfit."

His unit shipped out of the Brooklyn Naval Yard on the evening of October, Friday the 13th.

"I thought it was lucky, not an omen," Kohl added.

He remembers many men getting seasick on the large convoy.

"Two meals a day, standing tray to tray, with some men getting ill in their trays," he said. "I could only look away and keep on eating."

He said the ship was rather stuffy and he often found himself sleeping on the deck in good weather. The trip went well for Kohl until they hit rough seas before landing in Marseilles on Oct. 30.

"We weren't allowed to go on deck and I was put in charge of clean-up," he said. "A soldier went by me with a helmet full of seasickness and I ran for the head (toilet) to join him."

A day after landing in Marseilles, Kohl's unit set up its staging area. The unit's latrine was a box over a slit trench he found himself up using early one morning. He remembers some French women coming by and wishing him a good morning and decided to change his habits to night time.

An evening after he and Jungst were in a nearby village, Kohl found himself put on detail unloading tank parts from a 6x6. He and a general in-

fantryman (GI) were throwing boxes over the side. They happened to pick up a long box and Kohl soon felt himself being pushed backwards, the box tilting and falling off the truck. He turned, landed on his hands and knees and the box of parts fell on his back.

"I was taken to a French hospital to the G.I. ward that was filled with volunteer Japanese American soldiers," Kohl said. "I was impressed by their caretaking."

He remembers passing blood, them irrigating his kidney and getting his broken ribs taped. During his fifth day in the hospital, his company commander came in and said, "Kohl, I am taking you out of here. If I leave you, they may put you in the infantry. You can have my cot to sleep on and 30 days of no duty."

"He was always looking out for me," Kohl added. "He was a good commander."

His broken ribs caused him to miss a lot of scenery as his unit headed north the very next day. Kohl said he got to see that scenery years later on excellent highways.

After healing, one of Kohl's first duties was to clean the blood from a tank driver's seat while welders patched a hole in the front.

"It seemed that we were on the move every day keeping up with the front line until we were almost through Alsace," he said.

The Battle of the Bulge soon began and the siege of Bastogne where Patton pulled 86 tanks to go break the deadlock.

"We were pulled back to Saverne and told if they counter attacked here we would all become infantry with only our carbines," Kohl added.

His unit ended up moving into an enclosed area with a building that had a center staircase to the second floor.

"My unit was above the kitchen area and the other side was billeted on both floors," he said. "We were put to work sandbagging tanks."

He said bags were used for added padding and safety. Kohl's job was to cut angle iron with a torch while the arc welders welded the iron to the

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ARMY CHOSE KOHL...

(Continued from page 9)

sides and turrets to hold small bags of sand. If shot at with a bazooka, the extra protection would cause the enemy fire to burn out before penetrating the metal on the tanks.

"We had barely completed this when Patton called them cowards and said the sand was slowing the tanks down," Kohl said. "We had to cut them all off."

Even though he cannot remember the dates, Kohl easily remembers his unit taking some night bursts of artillery around the same time.

"I lay there hearing the explosion and then I heard the shell coming in," he said. "In the morning we would find some shrapnel in the woodwork."

He recalls waking one night after hearing a shell coming and another shaking the entire building where his unit slept.

"I was the first one to open the door to the stairway and all I could see was rubble," he said. "We lost 11 men in that blast."

A short time after the blast, Kohl's company commander called him in and said, "Kohl, you have an IQ high enough to go to Paris Officer Candidate School and become an infantry 2nd Lieutenant in six weeks."

"It was a 'No thank you' from me," Kohl replied.

His response came from knowing the war was almost over and the fact an infantry officer only lasted about 17 days on the front.

"Why would I risk it?" Kohl asked.

One night, Kohl's unit rushed to the aid of a family residing in a nearby French village. Their living quarters, above a cattle barn, was ablaze and Kohl's unit had the means and the will to help extinguish the fire.

"We rushed to their aid with our decontamination trucks filled with water," Kohl said. "I climbed the ladder and played fireman. The people yelled 'Bravo, bravo!' and every time I came down from the ladder, they would hand me a shot of schnapps and a wine chaser."

He said the decontamination

trucks soon ran out of water and he had to carry the water from the bucket brigade up and down the ladder.

"By the time the fire was out I was almost also," Kohl said.

Sometime later, Kohl remembers the enemy capturing a bridge up north as they were crossing the Rhine at night in blackout conditions atop a pontoon bridge. He said the unit always had a couple of extra tanks with them and he often rode in the turret because he liked the hard outer shell.

"When crossing the Rhine, I got on the front of a Sherman Tank with the intercom and guided the driver across," Kohl added.

After crossing the Rhine, his unit headed south on an autobahn. He remembers falling asleep in the turret and waking when they stopped the convoy on a side road.

"I pushed the lid up and started to get out when I saw a plane coming and tracer bullets in the night," he said. "I'll never know whether it was friendly or foe. The German air force was almost nonexistent at this point."

Kohl worked with tanks a lot during his time in the military. He remembers when he, his close friend Fred Jungles of Ravenna, along with three others volunteered to go to Frankfurt to bring back two new tanks.

"I drove one and Fred was my assistant," Kohl said.

The new tanks were wider and had steel tracks instead of rubber which made them slip more on hard-top roads. They also had diesel Cadillac V8 engines, automatic transmissions and two levers to steer them.

"I was driving with my face out when a tank retriever crowded me off the road and I took out a pole and left the cross arm and wires hanging," he said. "I suffered a cut lip. Later on, I hit the rear tire of a Quartermaster truck so I stopped and cut a willow sappling and put it between the track cover for a right side guide."

Enroute to their destination, Kohl and Jungles stopped in a village where GIs were raiding a wine cellar. The GIs generously loaded the tanks with wine bottles wrapped in straw.

"We spent that evening in the

Nuremberg Coliseum, where the Americans with Jesse Owens won the Olympics in 1939," Kohl said. "It was being used as a quartermaster depot and we filled up with gas. We also shared our wine and ate with the quartermaster troops."

Before the war ended, Kohl's unit lost one more man, Paul Wendler Jr. of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He and Roy Goodpaster were going after parts through a forest when a sniper shot Wendler through the head. Goodpaster pushed Wendler over against the spare tire on the Dodge weapons carrier to get into the driver's seat.

One evening towards the end of the war, Kohl's unit was billeted in a villa that German officers used and found it filled with fine Italian liquors. He and Jungst spent time fishing in a nearby stream where they were approached by a lady who came out of a nearby bungalow and offered them wine.

"After she drank some herself, we accepted it," Kohl added. "I never feared the Germans after the fighting had moved on."

The C Company 136 Ordnance Maintenance Battalion 14th Armored Division ended up in a factory in Torging on the Inn River. While there, the unit found a liberated German slave labor compound full of Russians.

"The first morning, the Russian women were showering in the factory when some of our men went there," Kohl said. "After that, the officers set days and times for us and the Russians."

He said there were three others housed there as well - Kohl, Jungles and Jungst spent several evenings with them celebrating the end of the war with music and Cossack dancing.

Once Kohl's time in the European theater ended, he was sent to a replacement center in Namur, Belgium. His plans to go to the U.S. for a furlough and then to the Asian theater were changed after the 'A' bomb dropped and Japan surrendered. Kohl's new orders took him in Charleville, France in an anti-aircraft battalion, pulling train guard duty.

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ARMY CHOSE KOHL...

(Continued from page 10)

"With MP (military police) arm bands, we could board any train," Kohl said. "We took side trips to Brussels, Belgium, and visited the English soldiers' club."

A short time later, he was sent to Camp Lucky Strike, near Marseilles where he spent 10 days residing in rail passenger cars before they had space in the camp for his unit.

From there he boarded and sailed on the Liberty Ship St. Albans for 16 days, where he spent Christmas 1945 and New Year's 1946 at sea.

"Sailing up the Hudson past the Statue of Liberty, hearing the band, seeing the flag waving and the crowd at the dock still brings tears to my eyes," Kohl added.

On Jan. 10, 1946, Kohl was discharged from the Army at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

"I was asked to join the Reserves, which I passed on, given \$14 and told to find a way home," Kohl said.

With a duffel bag in tow, Kohl hitch-hiked for six hours back to Hastings.

"I don't remember how many rides I had, but I never waited long," Kohl said. "I was so happy to see my Betty Lou, 7-month-old son John and the rest of my family."

Years after being discharged, Kohl received correspondence from a family member of Edan T. Knutson, a fellow soldier in the 136th ordinance. Knutson's great-nephew wanted to know what happened to his great-uncle during World War II and Kohl had the means to inform him.

Kohl used his copy of the "History of the 14th Armored," which contains a paragraph describing how members of the unit, including Knutson, lost their lives fighting for their country.

The paragraph says: "At Saverne,

Alsace Annie, a German 380mm (15 inches) railroad gun firing from 30 miles away, was laid on supply installations in the city and the Germans fired every Wednesday and Saturday night. They kept it hidden in the daytime so the Air Force could not take it out. And at Saverne, from this gun, the 136th suffered its gravest loss. One round hit squarely in C Company barracks - 11 men were killed and 13 wounded. T/5 John Brenner came out in the fire to give first aid to the wounded, and men of Headquarters and A Company were alerted to dig out the wounded men. C Company moved to Hochfelden."

Over the years, Kohl also had the opportunity to go on a World War honor flight and earn an honorary master's degree in military science from Cumberland University. The university gave all personnel in the 14th Armored Division a degree. ■

BILL BREER, NATIONAL PHOTOGRAPHER, DIES AFTER EXTENDED HEALTH ISSUE

Bill Breer, as National Association Photographer, was on the scene at numerous 14th AD Assoc. reunions and tours snapping pictures and producing videos of those good times. Over the years, countless Liberators and family members got well acquainted with Bill's friendly smile and jovial conversations as he recorded the life and times of those attending these various events. After a serious motorcycle accident several years ago, Bill was not able to attend those events he had enjoyed so much.

William Zeder Breer was born September 7, 1922 and died on May 24, 2014. He served with E Troop of the 94th Cavalry, 14th Armored Division throughout his unit's combat experience in France and Germany. In civilian life Bill worked as an engineer.

During the many years Bill served as the Association's pho-

tographer he attended nearly all national reunions and made a number of trips to Europe with 14th AD tour groups, recording the many interesting and enjoyable experiences of the participants. Bill's masterpiece video was the one entitled "From Marseilles to Munich" which tells the story of the 14th AD's war exploits. This video, as well as the many others he produced, were made available at a nominal cost to those interested in procuring copies. These videos will remain a lasting tribute to Bill's expertise and a record for future generations to study. For this the 14th AD Association owes Bill Breer many thanks.

In traveling to Europe on several occasions after the war, Bill became a close personal friend of Rev. Georges Pfalzgraf who played host to the 14th AD tour group in 1995 when they helped the towns

of Hatten and Ritterhoffen celebrate he 50th anniversary of the end of WWII.



GUS HINRICH, FORMER 14th AD ASSOC. LEADER, SUCCUMBS TO ILLNESS



Members and friends of the 14th Armored Division Association lost a dear friend and comrade with the passing of Gus Hinrich on November 14, 2014 at the age of 89. Gus, who served in leadership roles for many years in the Association, had made plans to attend the September reunion in Milwaukee but shortly before that event he unfortunately fell and was seriously injured.

Gus was a decorated veteran of World War II, having served in Co. A of the 62nd AIB, 14th AD as a squad leader (staff sergeant). During the late months of the war, although only 20 years old, he received a battlefield commission and, as a lieutenant, served as a platoon leader. As a reserve officer he was called back into the Army and

served as a platoon leader in Korea with a tank unit.

Born in Wakefield, Nebraska in 1925, Gustov C. Hinrich received his education in that state and began a 30-year career in education. He taught high school math at all levels, served as school principal and was teachers' union president in Niles, Michigan.

Gus wore many hats during his years as a member of the 14th AD Assoc. He served as editor of *The Liberator* for a time. In 2002 he was president of the Association and hosted the annual reunion in Spokane, Washington. When Horst Froelich was no longer able to serve as treasurer and executive director in 2006, Gus was named to assume those duties. He also assumed the duties as secretary when Ralph Jackson resigned in 2007 and continued in that capacity also until his daughter, Ann Lapo, became secretary in 2009. Gus continued as executive director until resigning in September 2011.

Mr. Hinrich also served as president of the New Horizon Club of Monrovia, and was a member of Saladin Shriners of Grand Rapids, MI. An active sportsman and champion golfer, Gus was also a lover of opera, gourmet food and fine wines.

Gus is survived by his wife of 17 years, Doris, who many reunion attendees learned to know well and ad-

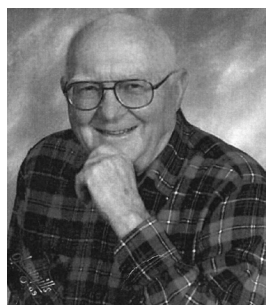
mire. She continues to make her home at their longtime residence in Monrovia, CA. Among other family members left to mourn his loss are his son Gustov (Jan) of Grand Rapids, MI, and daughter, Ann Marie Lapo, of Mason, MI.

Gus' first wife (mother of his two children) predeceased him in 1990. After Marjorie's death, Gus married Bertha who many of the 14th AD Assoc. got to know at reunions. She passed away in 1996.

Memorial services were held in Grand Rapids, MI and Pender, NE. Memorials were given to Gus' favorite charities, City of Hope and Salvation Army.



JAMES "SCOTT" WHEELER DIES



James "Scott" Wheeler, 90, of Lebanon, Oregon, died January 24 at his farm home where he had resided most of his life. After graduat-

ing from Lebanon High School, Scott attended the University of Oregon before enlisting in the Army in 1943.

Scott served with the 14th Armored Division as a squad leader in Co. A., 62nd AIB. He served in combat with his unit throughout the European

campaign, from the time they landed in southern France until the end of the war in Germany. He helped liberate prisoners of a concentration camp as well as military POWs at Moosburg.

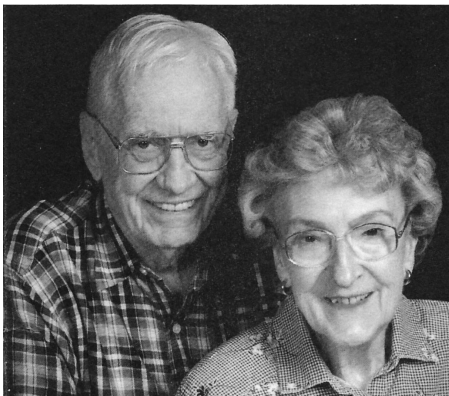
After his discharge from the service in 1946 he married Edith "Louise" Parker and they made their home on the family farm where they resided their entire married life. Here they reared their family of ten children. Surviving Scott are his wife and children, as well as 15 grandchildren, 20 great-grandchildren and 2 great-great-grandchildren.

In later years Scott and Louise enjoyed attending a number of 14th AD

national reunions as well as the Western States reunions. He stayed in contact with a number of those he served with in his old outfit and made trips to see them in various parts of the country.

Funeral services were held on January 30 at the Lebanon Methodist church where he had been a member for over 60 years. He played in the church bell choir and had donated land for a local cemetery. He and Louise had also hosted numerous foreign exchange students from the Philippines, Thailand, Kenya, Mexico and Japan over the years.

PETE LAKEY AND WIFE DIE SAME DAY



Lawrence T. "Pete" Lakey, 90, retired chemical engineer, died July 26 at his home in Richland, Washington. His wife, Edith (Edie) also died the same day.

Pete served in Co. A of the 62nd AIB, 14th AD as a machine gun squad member.

Readers of *The Liberator* will note that a detailed account of Pete's military experiences and an accurate account of his unit's war record are contained in the autobiographical story that he submitted for publication a few months before his death. Members of the 14th AD Assoc. are indebted to

Mr. Lakey for this well written historical account and pictures that he provided.

Lawrence Lakey was born October 23, 1923 in Missoula, MO where he attended public schools before attending Montana State College previous to entering the Army in 1943. He participated in the ASTP program and then was assigned to the 14th AD. As a combat infantryman he participated in the Rhineland, Ardennes-Alsace, and Central Europe campaigns, receiving the Bronze Star for actions in France.

Upon completion of his military service, Pete returned to Montana State and earned his degree in chemical engineering in 1948. He and Edie were married in 1953 and were blessed with two daughters, Dr. Ellen Berg of Palo Alto, CA, and Mrs. Margaret L. Reinhard of Caromb, France, along with four grandchildren.

Pete's long and outstanding career in the field of engineering earned him professional recogni-

tion as he specialized in nuclear fuel reprocessing and radioactive waste management. In addition to being a member of numerous professional groups, he was active in veterans' organizations and the Kiwanis Club. He was also active in various ministries of his church and the Salvation Army.

Pete and Edie lived full and active lives, both loving to travel in the U.S. and in other countries around the world. Pete noted that one of his most memorable trips was the tour with his 14th AD comrades in 1995 when they revisited many of the places where they had served 50 years earlier. His work also often took him to Europe to visit nuclear sites, and he and Edie enjoyed their numerous trips to France to visit their daughter and family.

Sometimes Even C-Rations Were a Treat

by Loren Henton - 4th Inf. Div.

Editor's Note: Although the author of this story was not in the 14th AD, his description of Army meals is quite universal and should revive some memories for most of us. Perhaps most 14th AD units were served better food than is described here, and for that we are grateful.

In the stationary reserve status at the first location of our Company A, the company cooks had a mess line (chow line, food line) operating in a barn where the one Co A truck, the kitchen truck, was hidden. The truck hauled the field stoves and other kitchen gear on short notice without having to wait for a truck to arrive from the regimental trucking company. Some of the kitchen equipment or supplies could stay on the truck, unless it was needed for other uses. The kitchen truck could go

for supplies including ammunition if need be, and transport wounded to the battalion aid station. The kitchen truck was our most valuable equipment. That is why it also was a priority target for enemy artillery. We were told that after the last enemy attack, before we replacements arrived, the cooks were back in business as soon as the threat of attack seemed slightly diminished. When Co A had been under attack and down to 21 soldiers, the cooks were used as riflemen.

The standard cook routine was to try to have at least one hot meal per day. I.E. A hot meal before going on outpost or patrol, and another when you were back the next day. On duty in the village, one normally received two hot meals per day. K-rations (in a

waxed waterproof box about the size of a cracker-jack box which would fit in a field pocket) and C rations in a can were available. We had experienced the hash kind of C rations at the Metz, France major replacement depot, and thought the hash was good. Rifle companies were at the end of the supply line which got picked over, and we soon found out the only C rations which we received had the principal part 'Meat & Vegetable Stew'. Eaten cold, it soon grew tiresome, and was nicknamed 'Goat Stew', because we figured the stringy meat was lamb from Australia or Artentina. It didn't taste like beef.

Several weeks later when we had moved by truck to a different area, my platoon position was in some previously dug foxholes overlooking a river

(Continued on page 16)

REUNION RESERVATION - 14TH ARMORED DIVISION ASSOCIATION

51ST ANNUAL REUNION - SIOUX FALLS, SD - Sept. 17-20, 2015

Name (Print) _____ BN _____ BTRY, CO, TRP _____

Address _____ Phone _____ Reg. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

<u>CIRCLE PRICE OF EVENTS CHOSEN</u>	EVENT #1 THURSDAY Sept 17	EVENT #2 FRIDAY Sept 18	EVENT #3 FRIDAY Sept 18	EVENT #4 FRIDAY Sept 18	EVENT #5 SATURDAY Sept 19	
	RESTAURANT DINNER 6:00 pm	City Bus Tour & Lunch 10:00 am - 1:00 pm	Lunch 11:30 am - 12:30 pm	CASH BAR DINNER 6:00 pm	CASH BAR REUNION BANQUET 6:00 pm	
MAN'S NAME	\$30	\$40	\$16	\$35	\$45 <i>VETS FREE !</i>	
LADY'S NAME	\$30	\$40	\$16	\$35	\$45	
GUEST NAME	\$30	\$40	\$16	\$35	\$45	
GUEST NAME	\$30	\$40	\$16	\$35	\$45	
TOTAL	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	Total Reunion Cost \$

FREE Hot Breakfast Buffet Daily !

<p>_____</p> <p>Mail Reunion Reservation</p> <p>on or <u>BEFORE August 18</u> to:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ANN CHELETTE</p> <p>14464 CHANDLERVILLE RD.</p> <p>BEARDSTOWN, IL 62618</p>	<p>LIBERATOR DONATION (Tax deductible) _____</p> <p>WEB SITE DONATION _____</p> <p>ANNUAL DUES July 1, 2015 - June 30, 2016 \$10.00 _____</p> <p>LIFE MEMBERSHIP \$ 50.00 _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>ALL VETS ARE ALREADY LIFE MEMBERS</i></p> <p>(Enclose check or bring to reunion) GRAND TOTAL _____</p>
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- OR -

make phone reservation with Ann at 217-853-5882 & mail or bring check to reunion

Please check applicable boxes below and add information requested.

- I will be driving to the Reunion, arriving: date _____ time _____
- I will be leaving the Reunion by car: date _____ time _____
- I will be flying to the Reunion, arriving: date _____ flight # _____ time _____
- I will be flying home from reunion: date _____ flight # _____ time _____
- Special diets: _____
- I need wheelchair when I arrive at Reunion _____
- I need handicap-accessible hotel room _____

Accommodations - **ClubHouse Hotel & Suites**

5105 S. Howell Avenue - Sioux Falls, South Dakota
Reservations / Hotel Phone: (605) 361-8700
(ask for 14th Armored Division Reunion)

51st National Reunion - September 17 - 20, 2015

Complimentary shuttle transportation from airport -
call hotel (605) 361-8700

DRIVING DIRECTIONS

- From Points North; Travel on I-29 S to Exit 78 (26th St). Turn left and head East on 26th St and follow for approximately 1/2 mile. Hotel property is on the left.
- From Points South; Travel on I-29 N to Exit 78 (26th St). Turn right and head East on 26th St and follow for approximately 1/2 mile. Hotel property is on the left.
- From Points East; Travel on I-90 West to exit 396A to merge onto I-29 South. Travel on I-29 S to Exit 78 (26th St). Turn left and head East on 26th St and follow for approximately 1/2 mile. Hotel property is on the left.
- From Points West; Travel on I-90 East to exit 396A to merge onto I-29 South. Travel on I-29 S to Exit 78 (26th St). Turn left and head East on 26th St and follow for approximately 1/2 mile. Hotel property is on the left.

14th ARMORED DIVISION 'PARTNERS' will meet you when you arrive to assist you with your luggage, park your car and return to you your keys and parking location.

OUR REUNION FACILITY

ClubHouse Hotel and Suites offers rooms with two queen beds, free wireless and Internet access, room service and much more. We will enjoy a complimentary hot breakfast buffet every morning! Also available are an indoor children's water playland, whirlpool / spa, beautiful sun deck / terrace and gazebo, exercise facility, business center, free parking, and attached Carino's Italian Restaurant. Pets are welcome!

CALL (605) 361-8700 FOR RESERVATIONS

Room Reservations received **AFTER AUGUST 18** may be subject to availability and higher rate.

Non-Smoking Property

GROUP NAME: 14th Armored Division Association

DATES: September 17-20, 2015

Please reserve: _____ Rooms for _____ # of people

Credit Card or Advance Deposit required

All rooms have 2 Queen Beds

All rooms are \$109.00 + tax

Daily check-in is after 3 pm, check-out by 11 am

Children 18 and under stay free with parent / guardian.

Reservations MUST be received by August 18, 2015

C-RATIONS...

(Continued from page 13)

ously dug foxholes overlooking a river about a mile or two away. Some of the foxholes had a few cans of C-rations in them. I was surprised to find C-rations also came in 'Spaghetti & Meatballs' which was a treat. It was a good example of the less you have, the more you appreciate the small luxuries.

Once in the 6-weeks I was with my unit, the Lt. Platoon Leader called us in one-by-one and gave us a REAL normal-size candy bar, like a Milky Way.

He also offered me a shot of whiskey, but I said give it to somebody else who would appreciate it. The rumor was that the 'D-bar' in K-rations had Ex-Lax in it. The dark chocolate in it was supposed to be high in energy and calories. There was always hot coffee with a mess line meal. I soon became aware lots of coffee was not for my stomach, so went easy on it. Also the black pepper in the dehydrated potato dishes was liberally applied to try to give them some taste.

Keep in mind that most of the food in WW-I had been Army baked beans and hardtack (like large crackers). In

WW-II we never had baked beans more than once a week. The closest thing to hardtack we had was the round cracker part in the C-ration can, and the cracker part in the K-ration.

K-RATION (about the size of a cracker jack box): Everything rectangular like cross-section of box. Cracker, "D-bar" chocolate, Nestle Cocoa packet, and/or coffee packet, Wad of GI green toilet paper, Wrapped chunk of cheese; Spam can with wind-up opener, Can't remember if anything else. ■

THE LAY OF THE LAND All Things Considered

by Lyn Messersmith

"What is honored in a country will be cultivated there." – Plato

There's a lot worth considering here, so let's define the terms properly. One of the ways that talking heads of all persuasions sway public opinion is the use of generalized wording that infers one thing, but on examination, means something else.

Honor: Webster mentions high regard, respect, glory, fame, and goes on to mention integrity, right and wrong, and dignity.

Cultivate: to prepare the soil, to destroy weeds, to improve by care, study, and training, to promote develop, to pursue.

I am determined not to be a naysayer who dwells on all that's wrong with America, or world affairs, but that doesn't mean my head is in the sand. Consideration of things our society cultivates leads me to the conclusion that a list of what is generally honored would include violence, sexuality, vulgarity, power, wealth, narcissism, entitlement, and disrespect. My knee jerk reaction is to run and hide because it's so overwhelming to think about. What hope is there for people who want to turn this around, especially when few of us are willing to face the ugly truth?

There are no easy answers here. Each person must decide for themselves whether choices made on a daily basis strengthen or weaken personal values. Some of those choices are so automatic, so ingrained in our routines, that we are unaware of the power they have to direct our lives, individually and collec-

tively.

Send a "selfie" to your sister...really? Why not call and thank her for having your back in tough times?

Tweet about what you had for lunch; or take a meal to a shut in neighbor?

Turn on the TV, play a video game, or go for a walk and thank God for the sunset?

Buy your kid the latest fashion or fad, or take them fishing?

Criticize the school at supper, or insist that table conversation be kind and mannerly?

Shop on the internet rather than at home, because it's cheaper and convenient. Everyone else does it. Heaven knows, our lives are stressful enough; we deserve a break. These don't even qualify as choices, in most of our minds; it's just life, what people do.

It's not hard to discover what we honor. A look at our checkbook, credit card statement, or personal planner will highlight the amount of energy and effort that flows to each component of our lives. But discovery is futile unless we are willing to dig out the weeds we've cultivated by mistake of simple neglect.

Will diligence in these matters make any difference in the grand scheme of things; change our communities, or the trend toward anarchy that seems inevitable? I don't know. What I do know is that it will change me, that it will require constant vigilance, that I will fall and get up to try again, but I will have lived more constructively.

The question to be faced, countless times each day, is a simple one. What am I honoring?

Random thoughts as I age...

Wouldn't it be great if we could put ourselves in the dryer for ten minutes; come out wrinkle-free and three sizes smaller.

Last year I joined a support group for procrastinators. We haven't met yet!

I don't need anger management. I need people to stop ticking me off!

Old age is coming at a really bad time! When I was a child I thought Nap Time was a punishment... now, as a grown up, it just feels like a small vacation!

Lord grant me the strength to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can and the friends to post my bail when I finally snap!

I don't have gray hair. I have "wisdom highlights." I'm just very wise.

My people skills are just fine, it's my tolerance to idiots that needs work.

If God wanted me to touch my toes, He would've put them on my knees.

I'm going to retire and live off of my savings. Not sure what I'll do that second week.

I've lost my mind and I'm pretty sure my spouse took it!

Even duct tape can't fix stupid...but it can muffle the sound!

Why do I have to press one for English when you're just gonna transfer me to someone I can't understand anyway?

Of course I talk to myself, sometimes I need expert advice.

INDIANS....

The federal government, which has "Tomahawk" cruise missiles and "Apache," "Blackhawk," "Kiowa," and "Lakota" helicopters - and used the code name "Geronimo" in the attack that killed Osama bin Laden, officially objects to the name of the Washington Redskins...

...Really??

RECOLLECTIONS OF MY MILITARY SERVICE IN WWII

by L. T. (Pete) Lakey

Editor's Note: This is the second installment of L.T. (Pete) Lakey's recollections of his service in WWII. Sadly, Pete died last summer, as did his wife, so he will not see his story in The Liberator. His well kept account of his unit's war efforts serve to remind many 14th AD veterans of their own experiences.

INTRODUCTION TO COMBAT AND THE CAMPAIGN IN THE VOSGES - (November 1944)

22 Nov 1944 - Ran into our first action. The leading platoon of Company A stopped when their Lieutenant, Richard L. Good, was wounded (shot in the testicles and died later) and a squad leader, S/Sgt Wilbur A. Bachman, was killed by a sniper while trying to save Good. Our platoon took over the lead. I and a few others were riding on the lead tank when we ran into a roadblock on the St. Quirin Valley road. I was on the tank leaning against the turret when it was hit with a bazooka shell fired from the trees along the road. The hit was on the side of the tank opposite me. All of us on the tank jumped off, heading for the ditch and looking for the enemy. Couldn't see or hear a thing. The tank column moved back and we remounted onto the half tracks. We then heard and saw Germans on the road below us and we began firing machine guns at them. Don't know how much damage we inflicted. Later, we learned that a rifleman in our platoon, William Pugh, had been killed inside the tank and three others on the tank had been injured. The rifleman had been invited inside to get warm and his body absorbed the full impact of the bazooka shell. It was colder than h---! at this time and most of us had light cases of diarrhea.

CCA was transferred to the XV Corps and directed to a point northwest of Schirmeck.

24 Nov 1944 - The 62nd AIB moved into Grand Fontaine and spent Thanksgiving Day there. My platoon was stationed outside of town and I recall Thanksgiving dinner (two pieces of turkey) being served out of a garbage can on a jeep.

25 Nov 1944 - The 48th Tk Bn took Schirmeck. S/Sgt. Ernest Her-

rara, squad leader in the 2nd Platoon of A Company, was killed by a sniper while standing in his half track. He was buried alongside the road with his rifle and helmet left as a marker. (Zorns, pp 84-85)



Pfc Charles Quinta helping Pfc William C. Dahlman dismount from the back of a tank.

BREAKOUT ONTO THE ALSATION PLAIN AND ON TO THE RHINE RIVER (November 1944-December 1944)

27 Nov 1944 - Left Shirmeck and the Vosges Mountains and came out on the Alsatian plain, heading for a line through Erstein-Benford-Selestat. Accompanied 48th Tank Battalion, riding on the tanks, through Valiff, Obernai, and on to Barr. At Barr, we dropped off the tanks and followed the tanks into town. That night, the 48th ran into stiff opposition in Barr and lost many tanks (must have been at least two dozen). I can recall many burning and knocked out American tanks with the tank crew members burned or shot as they tried to get out of them.

(Phibbs, in his book on the 12th Armored Division, told how he learned the Germans had a low opinion of our tanks and referred to them as "Ronsons" taken after the name of the famous cigarette lighter. They said our tanks had a high profile, making them easy targets; furthermore, our tanks used gasoline instead of diesel oil and when hit, exploded like a "Ronson" lighter.)



Tank knocked out near Barr.



28 Nov 1944 - Post Office in Barr. Tank in foreground had been knocked out. Our squad was inside post office when we flushed several Germans from the building across the street.

29 Nov 1944 - 62nd AIB attacked St. Pierre.

04 Dec 1944 - CCA was billeted in and around Hochfelden until the 13th. Our company was billeted in Wickersheim.

15 Dec 1944 - CCA, including the 62nd AIB, given mission of seizing Wissenbourg and crossing the Lauter River. Reached the outskirts of Soult that evening. We were moving on foot along a road and passing another squad when a mortar round came in, killing two men ahead of me and wounding two behind me. Our Squad Leader, S/Sgt James W. Hatch, and the man carrying the machine gun with me, William C. Dahlman, lost legs. Sgt Casimir F. Smolock and Pvt Carl Jackson, a replacement, in the Second Platoon

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RECOLLECTION OF MILITARY SERVICE...

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were killed. Found a piece of shrapnel in the butt of my carbine later. Hugh Batchelder took over as our Squad Leader and James Shaw became the assistant Squad Leader.

15 Dec 1944 - Left Soulz and proceeded through Schoenberg, Riedseltz and Hoffen. The interior of the half track was getting pretty messy by this time. The floor was covered with about three inches of unsmoked cigarettes and unused k-rations (the trash provided insulation and softer footing).

Going to the bathroom on the fly was always a humorous event. The man requiring relief would move to the back of the half track, open the back door and drop his pants. Two buddies would hold him while he performed his ritual out the back door.

15 Dec 1944 - Took Altenstadt and Wissembourg.

Opportunities to sleep were taken at any time. We slept on the ground, in barns and in empty houses. I recall one incident when my squad moved into a nice house essentially intact with beds having large feather tick covers. One of our men, a tall gangly kind who never cut his toenails, jumped into bed and split his feather tick from top to bottom with his toenails. We had feathers all over the place but it gave us a healthy laugh.

16 Dec 1944 - Crossed the Lauter River and began operating in Germany.

16 Dec 1944 - CCA attacked north from Wissembourg but ran into heavy resistance at Rechtenback. The 62nd AIB was relieved by the 68th AIB and moved back to Oberseeback.

THE OTHER BATTLE OF THE BULGE - PROJECT NORTHWIND

(December 1944-February 1945)

21 Dec 1944 - Task Force Hudelson, which included the 62nd AIB, was formed to set up a ten mile defense line in the Vosges, running from south of Bitche, through Equelshardt to Neunhoffen. The task force was part of CCR in the VI Corps. We were widely dispersed because many units had been sent north to help in the Battle of the Bulge. My platoon was covering a road

outside of Phillipsbourg and we dug at least three different foxholes in the course of getting organized. Remember it being bitter cold and digging being very difficult. Platoons would alternate between covering the line and resting in town.

25 Dec 1944 - On Christmas Day, we were in town. Christmas dinner was being prepared when an artillery barrage blew up the kitchen truck. We had cold rations for Christmas dinner. While the barrage was under way, my squad took cover in the basement of the Mueller Restaurant. (During our visit to Phillipsbourg in May, 1955, we visited the restaurant and met Simone, a woman who played the piano in the church in Phillipsbourg on Christmas Day, 1944. She was sixteen at the time and still remembers the incident.)

(A letter to my folks written after Christmas talked about our accommodations over Christmas. I referred to the many Sunday School programs in which I had participated where Christ was portrayed as being born in a manger and this Christmas, I had slept in a manger.)

Many of the men were having trouble with their feet because of the cold and lack of clean socks. Quite a number had to be taken off the line for a few days to recover. For some reason, I wasn't particularly bothered - it must have been the Scandinavian heritage. Also, I had learned to squirrel away an extra pair of socks so I could change them now and then.

About that time, a rumor circulated about a G.I. deserter being put to death by firing squad north of us. As I found out later, deserters were becoming a problem though, to my knowledge, there were none in my outfit. I'm now certain the rumors were encouraged to scare the men into staying with their units.

The Germans at this time were being stopped north of us (Battle of the Bulge) and switched their attack to the south where we were (German Operation Nordwind). Two German Divisions, the 256th and 361st Volksgrenadier Divisions, attacked the 14th Armored's sector on New Year's Eve.

31 Dec 1944 - My squad was dug in to cover a road leading into Phillipsbourg and we had covered our fox-

hole with logs and dirt, after which the fresh snow made it almost invisible. That night, the Germans initiated an attack on our positions. We heard them coming (it was a soft, moonlight night) and finally saw a group of them on the road in front of us. They were talking in German. We tried to get the machine gun pointed in their direction but it was blocked by a tree. Our companion machine gun on the left opened up and the shooting started. Our artillery began dropping shells on us (it had been sighted in on our positions in anticipation of an attack). Screams indicated some of the Germans were hit and they retreated. One shell hit the lip of our foxhole; another six inches further and it would have been a direct hit in our foxhole.

01 Jan 1945 - At daylight, we found our squad leader (S/Sgt Hugh Batchelder) dead near our foxhole. Evidently, he had come up from the rear when the shooting started and was hit by a German "burp" gun.

02 Jan 1945 - We began moving back the next day and were on a cold and frozen hillside just outside of Phillipsbourg when Germans began appearing on the opposing hill - one actually startled me by walking by less than 50 yards away. The machine gun was cold and difficult to operate at that time but I along with James Booth did get off a few belts of ammunition. It was this action for which I received the Bronze Star. Shooting was going on all around us and later we learned that we had been surrounded by the Germans. Some of our tanks then moved into Phillipsbourg and began firing over us into the Germans and the platoon was able to get into Phillipsbourg. According to the Division History, our company set a new Seventh Army record that day for enemy killed, wounded or captured in a single day. The 62nd AIB was pulled out of Phillipsbourg and fell back to the vicinity of Zinswiller to regroup.

While A Company of the 62nd was at Phillipsbourg, C Company was located around Bannstein about two miles to the northwest. They were attacked by German armor and infantry at the same time A Company was attacked. Fighting was severe and C Company

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RECOLLECTIONS...

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had to evacuate, leaving most of their equipment behind.

A woman who had befriended the Americans before the attack, turned sniper and began shooting at the GI's. She was cut down by machine gun fire. This event provided the grist for a movie, "Armored Comand," produced by Warner Brothers in 1961 and starring Burt Reynolds and Tina Louise. While the plot is pure fiction, the scenes show the countryside, weather and equipment of that era. The movie is available on videotape.



The 62nd AIB leaves Phillippbourg in Jan 1945 (Pommois 1991)

03 Jan 1945 - The Task Force was dissolved and the 62nd AIB was transferred to CCB of the XV Corps. Fighting continued in the vicinity all through this period with elements of the 42nd and 45th Infantry Divisions being involved.

11 Jan 1945 - The 62nd AIB was moved to Ingwiller and Kindwiller with the 3rd platoon of A-62 (my platoon) given the assignment of guarding Combat Command Headquarters in Zutzendorf.

12 Jan 1945 - CCB was ordered to assist CCA in an attack on Hatten and Rittershoffen. The following description of their assault is provided in the Division History.

CCB, moving out of Woerth-Riblisheim-Gunstet, launched its attack with the 62nd Armored Infantry Battalion and the 25th Tank Battalion, with the 499th Field Artillery in direct support, at 1130 on January 12.

The attack was designed to recover the ground west of Hatten and Rittershoffen, and to restore the MLR (main line of resistance) in that area.

A and C Companies of the 62nd, with C Company of the 25th Tank Bn, were in the assault: and the rest of the

25th, plus B-62, followed at 500 yards with the mission of going through and seizing the high ground north and east of Hatten.

The 62nd attack managed to get 1,000 yards past the line of departure; the men clad in OD's stood out like targets on a rifle range against the white snow, and the German fire cut them down; artillery fire, mortar fire, small arms fire sweeping the open land.

The men moved up to the line of departure, leaving the friendly Alsatian town, laughing, A-62's accounts states. For many of them it was to be their last laughter.

The 3rd Platoon of A-62 (my platoon) had been recalled from CCB, but did not arrive in time to take part in the attack, and so was the only platoon that did not suffer near annihilation.

The Germans waited until the entire infantry battalion was out on the open ground; then they opened fire. Wounded men dropped screaming to the the ground and were frozen where they lay. Captain Iannella was lost that day, and the 62nd's attack was stopped dead.

A Company suffered the worst casualties: Captain Iannella and 70-odd men were gone, and the company began to fall back, straggling man by man through the rest of the later afternoon and the night, as best they could through the fire.

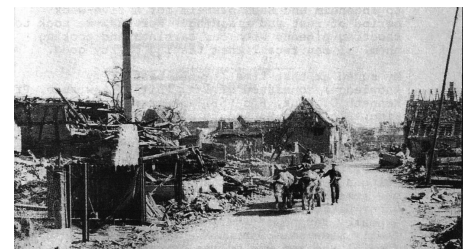
I didn't get a chance to talk to any of the men involved in the fight but Bruce Zorn, a Pfc in the 2nd Platoon of A-62, survived and subsequently wrote a book describing the event. He was badly wounded in the attack and feigned death on the field as the enemy troops methodically covered the field, bayoneting anyone that looked alive. He was able to crawl off the field after dark, but was found by two Germans the next day. He ended up in a prisoner of war camp at Heppenheim, where they amputated his leg.

(On our European tour in May, 1995, I met two of the individuals caught in the attack. Neil Webster of Bellevue, Nebraska was caught in the field and escaped by hiding behind a pile of cabbages until dark. Captain Iannella met the 1995 tour group at Hatten, France and described his experience. He was wounded and cap-

tured that day and substantiated Zorn's story about the non-walking wounded getting bayoneted or shot as they lay on the ground. Iannella was taken to a prisoner camp just inside Germany where he attempted to escape and was wounded again. They then put him on a train going deeper into Germany; the train was strafed by an American fighter and Iannella was wounded again. He was released after the war ended.)

Back at Zutzendorf, the 3rd platoon of A Company (my platoon) was ordered back to the line but didn't make it in time to take part in the assault. Our platoon leader, Lt. Dean T. Jones, took over A-62 as Company Commander. I was given a half-dozen men and sent up to replace the machine gun squad of the 1st platoon. That night we dug in on a hill near the original line of departure overlooking the battlefield. We saw Germans occasionally in a pillbox and in the trees about a mile away but didn't engage in any fighting. However, other elements of the 14th AD continued fighting in and around Hatten until ordered out of action on January 20th.

While dug in at this location, we were strafed by one of the new jet aircraft developed by the Germans. He came in to bomb two of our tanks parked 50 yards behind our foxholes but missed them. It happened so quick, I caught only a fleeting glimpse of the plane pulling away after his bombing run.



Hatten in January 1945



Hatten in May 1995, World War II armored equipment was restored by local car buffs.

Now It Can Be Told!

14th Armored Division

Editor's Note: *The following are excerpts from a small booklet by the above title which was published soon after WWII. The booklet belonged to Fred Harshberger who served with Hq Co. of the 62nd AIB, and most recently was president of our 14th AD Association. He passed away last November.*

7th Army in German Offensive

(The following account of the actions of the United States Seventh Army, under command of Lt. Gen. Alexander M. Patch, Jr., USA, during the period 15 Dec to 25 Jan., was prepared at Seventh Army headquarters at the request of the ARMY AND NAVY JOURNAL.)

An account of Seventh Army's successful repulse of an offensive by the German Army Group G and Army Group Upper Rhine during the first three weeks of January would not be seen in proper light unless considered in relation to the major German offensive against the First U.S. Army which began in the Eifel sector on 16 December - one day after Seventh Army troops crossed the German border. A second factor which cannot be ignored in Seventh Army's success is the fact that a mighty Russian offensive began on 12 January and assumed ever increasing proportions.

On 15 December, Seventh Army troops pushed into Germany around Bobenthal. They had secured Strasbourg, and faced Northeast, leaving the Colmar Pocket to be cleaned up by the First French Army. The Seventh Army at that time consisted of six Infantry and two Armored Divisions operating

under VI and XV Corps. The VI Corps was on the right, with its flank on the Rhine, and had under its command the 3d, 45th, 79th and 103d Inf. Divs. and the 14th Armored Div. On the left, XV Corps had the 44th and 100th Inf. Divs., the 12th Armored Div. and the 106th Cavalry Group. The Army front was 47 miles in width. VI Corps having a 31-mile frontage and XV Corps a 16-mile frontage. The Army right flank extended along the Rhine for 36 miles and was guarded by the elements of newly arrived infantry regiments who were to complete training in the Rhine Valley prior to employment in combat.

The most significant terrain feature in the Army sector was the rugged Lower Vosges Mountains which bisected the Army sector roughly parallel to the axis of advance and roughly corresponding to the boundary between the two Corps. On the East was the Alsace Plain and on the West was the gently rolling Saar River Valley. It was only in the Vosges sector, around Bitche, that the Maginot Line had not been reduced.

Having failed in three weeks of determined effort to penetrate Seventh Army's positions, the enemy made no further serious offensive thrust. The spotlight shifted to the American-French operations to drive the Germans from the Colmar Pocket. The Ardennes offensive had failed, and the Russian drive toward Berlin was drawing first-class enemy troops from the Western front.

To what extent outside influences

were responsible for Seventh Army's defensive success will perhaps never be known.

Bitche Penetration

Unable to make much progress against XV Corps west of the Vosges, the Germans attempted to exploit their initial penetration achieved against the lightly-held left flank of VI Corps in the area Phillipsbourg-Bitche. The mountains were anything but ideal for armor, but elements of the 21st Panzer Div. were reported shifting over toward Bitche. Apparently the intention was to open up the mountain passes and possibly secure a springboard for armor in the Rothbach area.

VI Corps on 2 January reacted swiftly. The 45th Inf. Div., with two regiments of 79th Inf. Div. attached, threw its weight against the shoulder of the salient Task Force Herren, also attached, occupied positions to block further infiltration. The maneuver made possible relief of Task Force Hudleson, which reverted to control of 14th Armored Div. in the vicinity of Bouxwiller. Troops in the apex of VI Corps advance into Germany, around Wissembourg, withdrew under orders to Maginot positions. On the right flank, Task Force Linden was attached to 79th Inf. Div.

Decision to Hold Strasbourg

The necessity for withdrawal from Strasbourg and the Alsatian Plain presented diplomatic as well as military problems. Numerous officials had been moved into this area by the French Government, and residents of the area

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RECOLLECTIONS...

(Continued from page 19)

20 Jan 1945 - The 62nd AIB was transferred back to CCA and moved to Ingeheim and Saessolsheim for a five-week period of rest and training. For fun, we took to shooting pigeons with our carbines and cooking them. I can recall them tasting pretty good.

My squad at that time (to the best of my knowledge) consisted of Sgt. Phil E. Lawrence, Pfc Kenneth G. Houk, Pfc Phil H. Herrman, Pfc Artie F. King, Pfc Lloyd R. Anderson and T/5 Wendell

"Tiny" Kilman (driver).

Believe it was here that my squad was sent on a patrol that required crossing the Moder River. Being a swimmer, I was the first one in the water, but immediately went to the bottom - it was deep! Other patrol members pulled me out and we went to a nearby farmhouse where I dried out. The farm family made some warm tea which sure tasted good. (One of the men who pulled me out of the water was Verlyn Hofer of Lennox, South Dakota. Verlyn was on our May 1995 tour of Europe

and, upon meeting me and recalling my name, substantiated the incident.)



Moder River

To be continued in next issue of *The Liberator*.

IT CAN NOW BE TOLD...

(Continued from page 20)

had shown their loyalty to France in a manner which would bode them ill, should the Germans return. It was highly desirable, if not an actual moral responsibility, that these people be warned of Seventh Army's intentions in time to get out. On the other hand, to broadcast the Army's intentions to all and sundry was obviously unthinkable from a tactical point of view.

Brig. Gen. John S. Winn had been designated U.S. Military Representative in the Strasbourg area to insure continuity of policy and action so long as the area remained in Seventh Army's combat zone. The French Military Governor at Strasbourg was General de Brigade Schwartz. These officers worked together in a highly efficient manner.

The French attitude toward the planned withdrawal from Strasbourg became apparent when a courier from General Schwartz's headquarters delivered a letter to the Seventh Army Commander's quarters at Luneville early in the morning of 3 January. In this letter, General Schwartz stressed the reprisals which would be made on patriotic Alsatians by returning Germans and implored the Army Commander not to go forward with the plan. Shortly thereafter a letter was received from General Winn, passing on General Schwartz's urgent plea that Seventh Army endeavor to hold Strasbourg and as much as possible of Alsatian Plain.

Fortunately, just as the matter was coming to a head, word came by telephone from higher headquarters about noon on 3 January that Strasbourg would be held. The Seventh Army Commander thereupon sent the following letter to General Schwartz:

"My dear General:

"I received your letter which was delivered to my Hq. by your aide on the night of 2-3 January.

"I understand fully your concern over the evacuation of your beloved Strasbourg, which was so dearly bought at the price of French and American blood. *** I am sure you will be relieved to learn that I have received permission from higher headquarters to defend Strasbourg, with all the means at my command.

(s) A. M. PATCH,

Lieut. Gen., U.S. Army, Commanding"

After the decision to hold Strasbourg, Seventh Army received approval of a plan to hold the Maginot Line east of the Vosges and the Rhine south from its intersection with the Maginot Line. This was considered the logical line to hold because its siting was good, the ground was already fortified, and lines to the rear were on terrain of indifferent defensive value.

With Strasbourg and the Alsace Plain at issue, the Germans during 3 January and several days thereafter continued to beat their heads against XV Corps - where success would yield the richest prize. Meanwhile they kept strong pressure against the eastern shoulder of the Bitche salient, from Phillipsbourg to Wildenguth, and attempted to deepen their penetration by infiltration.

Hatten-Rittershoffen Action

What transpired during the period 8-25 January, can best be told chronologically. The bitter fighting which saved Strasbourg does not fit into a neat picture. The emphasize the Gamsheim action at the expense of that at Hatten would be distortion. Nor should it be

forgotten that enemy threats from the Bitche salient and on the VI Corps front continued to be very real long after the Rhine flank claimed first priority.

As expected, the Germans drove viciously into the VI Corps Maginot position in the vicinity of Aschbach on 8 January. Shortly thereafter, 25th Panzer Grenadier Div. made its appearance in the Hatten area, apparently operating under command of 21st Panzer Div. in an attack called "Operation Feuchtinger" after the Commanding General of the 21st Panzer Div. It was apparent that the enemy was attempting a quick breakthrough to Hagenau, vital communication center, perhaps with the intention of effecting a junction where with enemy troops crossing the Rhine and with forces emerging from the Hardt Mountain salient.

Through January 20, when the VI Corps executed a planned withdrawal, the fighting in the Hatten-Rittershoffen area continued to be extremely fierce. Both 21st Panzer and 25th Panzer Grenadier Divs. suffered heavy losses in armor and infantry at the hands of the 14th Armored, part of the 79th Infantry Division and other 7th Army units. The enemy reinforced his troops in the Rittershoffen area on 13 January with elements of the 20th Parachute Regt., a recent arrival from Holland. The 10th SS Panzer Div. "Fruntsberg" was reliably reported in the Kaiserlautern area. Meanwhile, considerable reshuffling of enemy units was on in the Hardt Forest area.

Veterans of the 14th AD who fought at Hatten/Rittershoffen never forgot the epic battle that took place there. Nor have those communities forgotten the sacrifice made by American forces to stop the German armies in their attempt to recapture Alsace.

Enroll in VA Health Care

VA encourages all veterans to apply for enrollment in its health care system. They can do so online at www.va.gov/healthbenefits/enroll or by calling 1-877-222-8387.

Vets also can apply in person at their local VA medical facility. Once enrollment is verified, VA will photograph the veteran and mail him

or her a Veteran Health Identification Card.

Veterans will be asked to provide either one form of primary identification (driver's license, ID care with photograph, passport) or two forms of secondary identification documents (Social Security Card, Voter's Registration Card, original or certified birth certificate, Visit www.va.gov/healthbenefits/vhic for more information.

DID YOU KNOW...

Thomas Jefferson, at age 33, wrote the Declaration of Independence...

At age 36, was elected the second Governor of Virginia succeeding Patrick Henry...

At age 40, served in Congress for two years...

At age 57, was elected the third president of the United States...

At age 61, was elected to a second term as President.

The Fuehrer Was Watching

Adolph Hitler's Orders for Operation Nordwind and Hatten-Rittershoffen

by Jim Lankford

In November 1944, Adolph Hitler authorized a second counter offensive to follow hard on the heels of the major attack in the Ardennes. Although by late December, Hitler and his senior officers realized the German counter offensive in the Ardennes (Battle of the Bulge) might not reach its objectives, the second attack, code named Operation Nordwind, was ordered to proceed against the badly overextended and under strength US Seventh Army. Thus, Operation Nordwind, the last major German offensive of the war in the West, was scheduled to begin on New Year's Eve. On the evening of 28 December, at his military headquarters at Adlerhorst, Germany, the Fuehrer addressed the division, corps and army commanders responsible for carrying out Operation Nordwind along with General von Rundstedt, General Keitel, General Jodl, General Blaskowitz, Heinrich Himmler, and Martin Bormann. While issuing his personal orders regarding Operation Nordwind, Hitler took great pains to make certain his generals understood its purpose.

The Fuehrer: So this second attack has one clear aim: the destruction of enemy forces. This is not about questions of prestige. It's not about gaining territory. It's only about destroying enemy forces wherever we find them. It's also not about freeing all of Alsace in this manner..... It's much more important, as I said before, to destroy the human [U.S. Seventh Army] forces.

After Seventh Army was destroyed, Hitler told them, another offensive, Operation Zahnarst, would be launched by Army Group Oberrhein, under the command of Heinrich Himmler, leader of the SS. The planned attack would be made into the rear of Third Army, which at the time was fighting in the Bulge. Taken from behind, Third Army might also be destroyed.

Operation Nordwind was to be carried out by German Army Group G under the able leadership of General Johannes Blaskowitz. Some of the combat units under his control were badly under strength, but Hitler personally made certain that the 21st Panzer and

25th Panzer Grenadier Divisions, organized as part of the XXXIX Panzer Corps, were made as strong as possible. On 29 December, Hitler met with General Wolfgang Thomale, General Inspector of Tank Troops, to make certain that additional armored units over and above those needed to replenish the 21st Panzer and 25th Panzer Grenadier Divisions, would be made available following the initial attacks on New Year's Eve. Among these were six formidable Tiger tanks carrying the deadly 88mm gun, and two companies of "Hunter-Tigers" (Jagd-Tiger) equipped with the powerful 128mm gun. In addition, Hitler ordered two companies of flame-throwing tanks into the offensive. Thus, Hitler upped the ante, and at Hatten and Rittershoffen, the men of the 14th Armored Division would face these powerful armored units.

The first attacks came on New Year's eve in the Northern Vosges Mountains of eastern Lorraine, and elements of the 14th Armored Division were there to help stop them. With his attack stymied in the mountains, Hitler decided to launch his main effort against the center of VI Corps at the small villages of Hatten and Rittershoffen. On 9 January 1945 Hitler was given the following information during his Evening Situation Report.

The 25th Panzer Grenadier Division broke through the Maginot Line at noon and advanced to the area of the railway station 500 meters west of Hatten. The 21st Panzer Division took Hatten and pushed the enemy back toward the west. In the afternoon, both divisions met a stronger antitank barrage here, east of Rittershoffen. The divisions are regrouping now, and will continue the attack tonight at 2am....

The 21st Panzer and 25th Panzer Grenadier Divisions renewed their attacks at Hatten and Rittershoffen along with the other units of the XXXIX Panzer Corps, but as history records, they ran into the 14th Armored Division's Combat Command A (CCA), and their advance ground to a halt. Hitler ordered in reinforcements, and the battle escalated. A few days later CCA was

joined by CCB, and the following day, CCR came into the fray. The fighting intensified. In response, Hitler personally ordered General Blaskowitz to send in the veteran 20th Regiment, 7th Parachute Division, and a regiment of the 47th Volksgrenadier Division, along with other reinforcements. The battle became a grim, bloody slugging match. The men of the 14th Armored Division held their ground against everything Hitler could throw at them in what was, according to a veteran panzer officer, *one of the hardest, costliest battles that ever raged on the western front.* The VI Corps was now fighting on three sides against first class German divisions. The Americans at Hatten-Rittershoffen continued to hold despite heavy losses. Hitler, realizing his chance to break through the lines and destroy Seventh Army had passed, turned his eyes elsewhere. Seventh Army was in dire straits: On the right flank along the Rhine River the inexperienced 12th Armored Division lost an entire combat command (a battalion of armored infantry and a battalion of tanks). On the left, the veteran 45th Infantry Division had suffered heavy casualties including the loss of an entire infantry battalion. Lieutenant General Alexander Patch, commander of Seventh Army, decided to order a general withdrawal (retreat). The 14th Armored Division, was to hold the line at Hatten-Rittershoffen at all costs while the bulk of VI Corps established new defensive positions along the south bank of the Moder River. Only then, in the early morning hours of 21 January, did the 14th Armored Division, under the cover of friendly artillery fire, begin pulling back along icy roads to rejoin VI Corps. They left behind them the survivors of two worn out panzer divisions, as well as the remnants of an elite parachute regiment and other attachments. Later, a panzer officer of the 21st Panzer Division expressed the relief among his men: *We couldn't grasp that the murderous battle was over.*



MAIL CALL

WYRSCH SERVED IN 14TH AD

Elton and Verlyn,

Wanted to extend my best wishes to the "Liberators" of the 14th AD as you begin your 50th Reunion in Milwaukee, WI. Going to try and get to the next one. Thank you for your heroic efforts in service to our country and thank you for our freedoms.

Joined your association as a 2nd Generation life member a few years ago. (Capt. Fred R. Wyrsh - US Army, Cav.). He passed away in 1964. My father trained with the 14th AD upon his graduation from Armored OCS at Ft. Knox in 1943. He was with, initially, Co "C" of the 1st Battalion, 47th Armored Regiment and then subsequent to reorganization, commanded Co. "C" of the 25th Tank Bn. During April of 1944, after the Tennessee Maneuvers, he was transferred to a Replacement Depot, first at Ft. Meade, MD, and then to the ETO. He landed on Omaha Beach, Normandy, D-Day +18 and was in a "Repot-Depo" near La Havrem France for a few weeks. During late July, he was assigned to the 3rd Armored "Spearhead" Division of General Hodges First Army. He served with the 3rd through Occupation.

He was awarded: Silver Star; Bronze Star (2 clusters); Purple Heart (3 clusters).

I have recently come across letters and certain memorabilia from his time with the 14th. Below are pertinent pages of a newsletter from his pre-war employer, Yellow Manufacturing Acceptance Corporation/Yellow Manufacturing Credit Corporation ("YMAC/YMCC"). At the time, YMAC had been acquired by General Motors (and subsequently became GMAC). He sent a letter to his boss in Detroit, who had portions of it printed in their Service bulletin newsletter of serving employees. I think it provides an interesting snapshot of the experiences of the 14th while training in the US to go overseas. I thought I'd share it with you.

Hope it is a tremendously successful reunion.

All the best,

THE WORDS OF NATIVE AMERICAN, CHIEF DAN GEORGE

"My friends, how desperately do we need to be loved and to love. When Christ said that man does not live by bread alone, he spoke of a hunger. This hunger is not the hunger of the body. It was not the hunger for bread. He spoke of a hunger that begins deep down in the very depths of our being. He spoke of a need for breath. He spoke of our hunger for love."

"Love is something you and I must have. We must have it because without it we become weak and faint. Without love our self esteem weakens. Without it our courage fails. Without love we cannot look confidently at the world. We turn inward and begin to feed upon our own personalities."

"With it we are creative. With it we march tirelessly. With it, and with it alone, we are able to sacrifice for others."

I am so impressed with the words of this devout Indian Chief that I will pass them on to friends. Knowing of my interest in Native Americans, our daughter Karen, and her husband Kevin McHugh, sent me a book titled "The Wisdom of NATIVE AMERICANS" compiled by Kent Nerburn. Perhaps you will want to obtain a copy.

REMINISCES OF OLD TIMES AND FRIENDS

Dear Annie, (Charles Hudson's daughter)

I was cleaning out files this morning preparing my wife, Grace, for our move to the Nursing Home (Veterans Home at Fitzsimmons) located in the main medical center here and across the street from the old Fitzsimmons Army Medical Center where President Eisenhower recovered from his heart attack during his presidency. I'll give

you now our new address with Fitz's phone number. I will write your Dad when we receive our personal phone number.

We spoke at length yesterday and I told him I'd write as soon as we have all the specifics in our new home. I hadn't had a chance to speak with my great friend "Hut" since our talk after I received your letter of your Mother's passing.

My Grace and I began to show our ages in mid-2012 - she abruptly lost her short term memory, is in and out of several hospitals until 9/17/12 when our two kids - daughter, Debbie, living in the mountains and our son, Rick, M.E. and wife lives in the KC, Kansas area - found this Assisted Living place for us. We'll have been here one year on 9/17/13.

I surely thank you for your kind thoughtfulness in Wanda's passing. I was a part of their wedding party in 1947. Your dad then entered Eng School at Rolla. I was in my second year of law school at Wash U, St. Louis. Our mutual friend, John Hopkins and I started at Wash U together in Oct 1946. He was pre-dental and I was in law school. We needed a place to live so "Hoppy" led us both to Kappa Alpha (Southern) Fraternity which we joined mainly for good housing. K.A. was founded by Robert E. Lee when he was a student (I think) at William and Mary. Hoppy "fell in love" right away and I still played a bit more than I should have, but I "buckled down to business" at about the same time (1947 Fall) as "Hut" did.

Your dad was my salvation in ASTP. Being pre-law strictly, I had little aptitude for Science and Math. "Hut" was my "crutch" particularly in Chemistry. That subject was like a foreign language to me. Your Dad really saved me a great embarrassment during Christmas of '43. I hooked up with a fine gal at the freshman mixer and we were very close. She lived in Buffalo, NY and I was invited to her home for the Christmas holidays. I just had

(Continued next page)



MORE MAIL CALL

(Continued from page 23)

to go. I'd been seeing Dottie Kastendick at Spfid, and her brother, Casey (also ASTP in another Ohio college) was being married over Christmas. Casey and I were good friends, also, and Dottie just mistakenly felt I'd be there and stopped by the dorm to get me. I was long gone to NY and Charlie came to my rescue.

I talked with Charlie a couple of months ago, but thought I'd address you so we'll both be more surely correct in our relative addresses and phone numbers.

Charlie is by far my oldest and surely the best of my treasured lifelong friends. I was a freshman at STC in 1941 while Charlie and Hopkins were seniors at Greenwood (next door) and were skilled athletes and I was just a good fan and built like a "broom stick."

Our 14th Armored Liberator friends served in the three Tank Battalions, 25th, 47th, and 48th, and were all very lucky to get home in one piece.

James M. Melton

Co. C, 25th Tank

(Mr. Melton has passed away since he wrote this letter 9/12/13. Published at request of Charles Hudson.)

RECALLS THE LIBERATIONS OF HATTEN AND PFAFFENHOFFEN

Rev. Georges Pfalzgraf to American friends and to the Editor Verlyn Hofer and family,

Dear Veterans and friends, some of you had the opportunity to visit in Hatten the museum of American military vehicles of WWII. Between this museum and the meadows towards Rittershoffen there is the museum of the ARRI (the Shelter) which was part of the French Maginot Line to help tired or slightly ill soldiers to recover. This shelter is also an important museum of what happened in the whole area. In front of this shelter, which resembles a blockhouse, there is a large surface that serves as a lower stage and on the top of the shelter a higher stage to remind the population of historical events to make the people acquainted with what happened during the occupation of Nazism in Alsace which brought much misery

to the population under their yoke! And also to those who came to liberate us! What our American liberators have done for us especially in Hatten and Rittershoffen and elsewhere is great, although Hatten lost over a hundred civilians who were killed and Rittershoffen about forty during the hard fightings in streets and in houses in January 1945.

The American troops, with great energy, courage and noble bravery, did their best to stop the enraged enemy. Thus many civilians became victims of the fightings and at the same time many liberators! But thus were saved by the same way other towns in Northern Alsace. The Alsatian population remains deeply indebted to the American troops for the liberation and further for all the help they got from the States. As a pastor, I could see and read it on the faces of many persons. Why all that happened? they asked. And why all these sufferings and the high number of persons and soldiers who lost their lives or were injured? We have no answers to the questions coming up on the lips of many persons. Of course, we know that evil and injustice are generating new evil and new injustices and even war and fightings. We can only do our best and pray the Creator of the universe and of the weak mankind that He helps us to show more love, more understanding and more faithfulness. But what can the Creator do He has not yet done?! Therefore it is surely important that we inform and remind the populations of the evils we had to overcome. We must recall to them and speak about what happened and now with more maturity to help all to become more aware of the human problems. I think that it is why personalities came to the idea to make these shows in Hatten before the shelter with the help of a learned researcher and writer and a good technical director and of the famous theatrical group of Haguenau. This happened now three times there: The first show in 2006 had the title (I translate: "A Sky without star," an evocation of the Alsations who were forced to enter into the German Nazi army against their will and in despite of themselves, in French they are "the malgré-nous": those who

refused were shot, when they could not flee. The second show was given in July 2009. "The Night without following day," an evocation of our Jewish brethren and of what they suffered and of the dreadful camps. The third one in July of 2014 with the title "S'wurd endli Daa" (in Alsatian) and in French "Enfin le jour se lève" (I translate: "In the end (of the night) the daylight," an evocation of our liberation in December and finally in March 1945 brought by the American Armies among who was the 14th Armored Division. These historical shows were given in July a lot of times and were very well attended. The American troops have done their best to free us from a dreadful yoke. That is what we became fully aware of and that makes us Alsations deeply thankful.

Something similar is done in Pfaffenhoffen, the town liberated on November 26, 1944. For their show an important group of personalities have made a film recently, based on testimonies given by the older population about both liberations, the one in 1944 and the one in March 1945, because of the mad and foolish attempt of the Nazis known as "Nordwind." Therefore was choose the name, in Alsatian: "Pfaffenhoffen undrem Nordwind," (I translate: "Pfaffenhoffen under Nordwind," an evocation of both liberations interrupted but the foolish attempt of the Nazis. Nordwind prolonged the war and caused the battle of Hatten-Rittershoffen! The show will be repeated 8 times in Pfaffenhoffen from September 26 to October 5. From Pfaffenhoffen Bob McClarren started at the head of a large group of tanks towards Rittershoffen.

Thanks a lot to the Editor of the Summer issue with many informations on former soldiers of the 14th Armored Division. I am full of admiration for what he had done and does and to all the officers and to the President Fred Harshberger and also to the Auxiliary ones. I hope that the 50th National Reunion again this year in Milwaukee, will be a great success and that all those who attend it get great pleasure in meeting one another.

Yours sincerely,
Rev Georges Pfalzgraf,
friends and family

Book Review

by James R. Lankford
Chandler, AZ

The Embattled Past: Reflections On Military History: By Edward M. Coffman: The University Press of Kentucky, 2014. ISBN 978-0-8131-4266-1. Photographs. Maps. Notes. Index. Pp. 201.

Edward Coffman has long been highly regarded among military historians for his superb scholarship. Coffman was an early pioneer of using personal interviews of eyewitnesses and participants in historical events in order to gain additional insights and information. In this regard, he helped to set the standard for modern techniques in Oral History, and increase its acceptance within the academic community. In addition, Coffman produced a substantial body of work in which he brought to light important, previously overlooked aspects of the social history of the US Army. As a result of his many academic achievements, it is virtually impossible to undertake any serious course of reading on the history of the US Army without finding one's way to more than one of his books and articles.

With one notable exception, Coffman utilizes a selection of previously published articles to explain how and

why he came to be a military historian. Along the way he introduces readers to his mentors, advocates, and supporters, traces his long, successful career path, and shares some of what he learned about American military history in the course of pursuing his chosen profession. The overall result is a powerful, informative autobiographical compendium that is easily assessable to a broad audience.

Among these articles are a social histories including "The Duality of the American Military History: A Commentary" and "The American 15th Infantry Regiment in China, 1912-1938."

Coffman also addresses the American army's involvement in World War I with the essays, "The American Military and Strategic Policy in World War I," and "Why We Are Not Interested in World War I and Should Be." He follows with The Course Military History in the United States Since World War II, and examination how the field has changed within academia during this time period. The chapter, "Reflections on Doing Oral History and Military History" provides valuable information and insight into these subject. Of equal interest in Coffman's "The Shadows of

Time: Experienced in Research." Coffman then moves on to share his memories of working with the great military historian, Forrest C. Pogue as well as his friend and mentor Thomas D. Clark of the University of Kentucky. Other chapters on various historical topics are intermingled with those mentioned above. Like the others, each carries additional insights into the methods of a consummate military historian.

Equally informative is the inclusion of a previously unpublished account of his interview of General of the Army, Douglas MacArthur. Significantly, Coffman describes this as his *most memorable interview* from among the scores (hundreds?) of people he interviewed during his long career. This account forms the last chapter of the book, and is a fitting way to conclude a work that is at its core an advanced primer on how a young man from Kentucky rose to the top of his profession to become a role model, teacher, and mentor to a multitude of current and future American military historians.

The Embattled Past is a 'must read' for anyone interested in American military history. One can only hope it reaches the widest audience possible.



Dear Ann & Jess,

I am sending you a check for \$50 for postage for the *Liberator*. My late husband, Paul Oberla, and I attended many National reunions. He was in 136 ORD, Co C. He loved golf and won a trophy at the 1988 reunion for 'closest to the pin'.

We also attended many Midwest reunions at LaCrosse and Paul enjoyed golfing there with Harold Kiehne and his other buddies. Paul passed away in 2008 at 92 years.

I am 94 now and feel blessed that I can still enjoy many things. Keep up the great work you are doing. I love

the *Liberator*. Have a great time at the reunion, wish I could be there.

Best regards,
Elma Oberla

Jess,

What a wonderful job you completed in locating our dear friend - former member of our 14th Armored Association. He was quite a guy - wonderful obituary - did a lot for our Division.

Enclosed find \$50. Give to Ann, hope she can use money for announcing his death in our *Liberator*. Sgt. Gregg I Ney - a medical tech, helping wounded soldiers from Co B 84th Med Batt - my best friend.

Keep sending the *Liberator* - forever!

Thank you, Jess. It's about time I write to you and Ann and enclose my diary in my book, "Tonight I Got My Orders". I wrote about my daily life overseas with the good old 14th!

You have my permission to write anything you think could be included in the *Liberator*. Also any members who went overseas with us *Liberators* back in the 70's - say 'hello'. Fran and I are still alive, both 93. Hope to hear from someone!

Enclosed find \$25 check - a thank you for helping keep the *Liberator* going and in memory of my buddy Co B Staff Sgt Gregg Ney, who died in December.

Russ Bracco

2014 Memorial Service

As is traditional at gatherings of veterans, we gathered on Saturday, September 20, to honor those who had passed from this life since our 2013 Reunion in Milwaukee, WI. National President Fred Harshberger welcomed the group and led us in the Pledge of Allegiance. Colors were posted by the Milwaukee Fire Honor Guard. Jess Chelette, National Treasurer, provided the invocation, and shared Words of Honor, a letter from Rev. Georges Pfalzgraf, following our remembrance ceremony.

The list of 30 veterans and their ladies was read by National Secretary Ann Chelette, with a bell tolled by Past President Robert McClarren. Ladies Auxiliary President Gayle Siewert and Loverne Klobucar placed poppies on

a wreath for each remembrance announced in chronological order of their passing.

Veterans

Henry Leudke - 27 Tank Co B
 John A. Sweney - 501 Arty Bty B
 Marcel D. Baloché - 47 Tank Co A
 Herbert Clarke - 501 Arty Bty B
 Richard Rundle - 19 Inf Co C
 Homer C. Powers - 499 AFA Bty B
 Anthony Wieman - 501 Arty Bty B
 Robert L. Smith - 19 Inf Co A
 Albert Elgin - 500 Arty Bty A
 Robert O. Austin - 125 Eng Co B
 George S. Morgan - 125 Eng Co B
 Arthur Mullins Sr. - 62 AIB HQ Co
 Hobart H. Matthews - 62 AIB Co B
 David G. Kehr - Support Trains
 Arthur L. LaFleur - 19 AIB Co A

Heinz Kohring - 501 AFA Bty A
 Leslie Wilbur - 501 AFA Bty A
 Clyde Cox - MP
 Joseph J. Dabuliewicz - 19 Inf Co A
 Bill Lay - 62 Inf Service Co
 Arthur W. Gustus - 68 AIB Service Co
 Kenneth English - 94 Cav E Trp
 Paul Perlinger - 499 Arty Service Bty
 Judge John P. Meyer - 501 Arty Bty B
 Joseph Horlacher - 62 Inf Co B
 Charles Eder - 25 Tank Co B
 Kirby V. Alexander - CMD HQ Co
 Ron Medhurst - Unit unknown
 Neil Webber - 62 Inf Co A
 Charles DeBoer - 19 Inf Co C

Ladies

Frances Siewert - widow,
 Bill H. Siewert, 62 Inf Co C
 Janet Gillis Snoberger - wife of
 Phil Snoberger, 68 Inf HQ Co

DONATIONS



Many readers - the majority are veterans! - accepted our Challenges to contribute to the *Liberator!* We hope more readers will also be able to do so as they are able. The *Liberator* must continue to be published and sent to all members! Vets' names underlined.

With sincere thanks to:

Twila DeBoer - in memory of her husband, Charles DeBoer
 Russell Bracco - in memory of Dr. F Gregg Ney
John Klobucar
Russ Smith
 Terry & Jack Harvey

Waldine Leudke
Elton Ross
Robert McKeague
 Virginia Procnier
 Eric Nordstrom
 Mary Ann Benincasa
 Melanie Reuter-Finn
Bennie Cardinate
 Gayle Siewert
Chuck Hudson
Al Burmeister
Thomas McCoy
Valdo Easau
Larry Miller
WZF Walker
 Marianne Lohof
Robert McClarren
Thomas Boyd

Elma Oberla
Russell Bracco

With great appreciation to:

Paul Pauzer - in memory of Neil Webster
 Patrick Reall
Warren Armbruster
 Jess & Ann Chelette
John Arena

With lasting gratitude to:

Philip Snoberger - with the most honor and respect for our comrad and beloved friend Fred Harshberger
 Matt Sitnik
Gus Hinrich
 Doris Hinrich



NEW MEMBERS



ESPER ESAU, 499 Arty B Bty

WALDINE LUEDTKE, 25 Tank Co B



Dear Ann & Jess,

Wishing you, your family and all of the people that make up the *Liberator* and keep all of us in touch with one another. And who left us, also. I see that our President Fred just left us, also. He come down to see me this past summer. He was a wonderful guy and we all will miss him. Well, Ann as you know one day we will all be gone. This past January 16 I became 99. With the

good Lord's help, maybe 100 won't be too far away. It will be all up to Him. Just an old soldier still around.
 John Murphy

Dear Ann,

Thank you for sending the *Liberator*. It is always very important for us to receive it and I read it to the end. Have wonderful days at the Reunion and thanks for your work.

Marianne Lohof Widow of Ray Lohof, 68 INF CO B, LUG INS LAND



Membership Renewal Notice

MAIL TO:

____ Enclosed ANNUAL DUES \$10.00
____ Payable for Membership July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016
Note: ALL 14th AD VETERANS HAVE BECOME LIFE MEMBERS
____ Enclosed is \$10.00 for enrollment / dues of my:
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 Daughter _____
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____ Life Membership \$50.00
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Donations Appreciated

Without the generous support of many donors, it would be most difficult to continue the publication of **The Liberator**. Thank you.

Liberator & Association Staff

I GOT MY ORDERS...

(continued from page 3)

son - we were high above sea level in the German Alps. We crossed the Rhine at Mannheim. There we noticed a recent G.I. bridge dedicated to Ernie Pyle - "our friend" killed at Iwo Jima in action, news commentator. Traveling further south to Stuttgart, a large industrial city - great in mfg. of Messerschmidts ... looked like a ghost town. We crossed many rivers and streams, all of them bridged by Engrs, with pontoons and treadways. Roads were surprisingly good. Now and then we had to pave our own way through fields, etc. Late Sunday night, we crossed the Danube River near the city of Ulm. The Danube was narrow at this point and crossing it took practically no time. The Engrs had another pontoon bridge there. And while I'm writing about bridges and other important crossings, I might add that the "AAA" boys are stationed all about the vital bridgeheads, mostly 44 bofurs guns. About midnight we arrived at our destination, a small town named Aich. The 71st Ref Btn had just made HQ that day.

I slept in a warehouse on a pile of wood shavings. The night was cold and miserable. That ride wasn't what you'd call a pleasure trip.

Monday a.m. I woke up bright and early, not on my own account either. Had chow and then we had to pitch squad tents and make our home for the time being as comfortable as possible. The wood shavings were used for boxing. The Germans prefer that to straw. So I made my bedding of that seeing how warm I slept last night. The town was spearheaded not exactly taken and occasionally rifle fire was heard. We were up in the mountains and a natural haven for German pockets to exist. The town's people were mostly well to do peasants and hundreds of slave workers were employed, mostly French. Now that the place and nearby villages had been occupied by American troops, hundreds and hundreds of ex-allied prisoners came strolling in - many had escaped German stalags (prison camps); some included Americans who have been held captive for months. Heard their stories and witnessing their conditions was indeed nerve racking. A

few British who were prisoners four and five years almost hugged us to death. A happy bunch. Honestly, it is tear shedding listening and asking them of their treatment. I can't repeat many of their stories, they are too numerous to relate. One I was very surprised to learn was that the German bread they had been issued was 30% made of wood shavings. Civilians had 10% bread made out of that filing, too. A proof that the Germans were short on food. They told us of the numerous bombings and raids they had been in. They worked at railroad yards. One day the American bombers destroyed everything and then they had to reconstruct. Then bombers came back again. It was continuous like that for months. They say the Germans are very methodical. They dreaded being shipped by rail, many times they were caught under a hail of fire. I could go on and on but its too much. Prisoners who were released were shipped back as soon as transportation facilities permitted. They earned a well and speedy return home. We pray for their wishes."

WHAT ... YOU'RE MOVING!



ADDRESS CHANGE

PLEASE help us eliminate delays by advising us promptly of any change in your contact information.

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State _____ Zip _____
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TAPS NOTIFICATION

PLEASE share any information you have about the deaths of 14th Armored Division members.

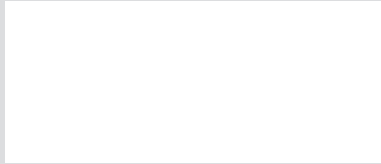
Name _____
Unit _____
Street & No. _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____
Survivor _____
Phone _____
Information _____
Date of Death _____

**NOTICE:
LIBERATOR ISSUE DATES!
MAY - DECEMBER**

Information **MUST** be submitted
SIX WEEKS before issue!

ALL INFORMATION SHOULD BE TYPED.

Send all information to:
VERLYN HOFER



**NEXT DEADLINE IS
OCTOBER 15, 2015**

PLEASE CHECK YOUR ADDRESS
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All changes of address should be
sent to Ann Chelette,
National Secretary/Treasurer

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**MESSAGE FROM
THE LIBERATOR
EDITOR**

With every passing year we are losing more 14th Armored veterans, and with them we are likely losing many stories of interesting and sometimes harrowing experiences. If you are a veteran (or family member of that vet) who has never submitted a story of your military experiences to The Liberator, please consider doing so.

Just send typed hard copy or e-

...ing stories appearing in local newspapers or other publications can be used in The Liberator. Your comrades and friends are anxious to read about your experiences while serving with the 14th Armored Division. Mail Call articles and other materials for publication are also welcomed.

With the change in policy of publishing The Liberator just twice a year, the next deadline date for submitting copy is October 15, 2015.

Verlyn Hofer, 62-A

**A SOLDIER AND
HIS GOD**

The poem below first appeared in the *Becker County Record*, Detroit Lakes, Minn. It was found on the body of a 19-year-old soldier in Vietnam.

Look God: I have never spoken to you, but now- I want to say: "How do you do?" You see God, they told me You didn't exist and like a fool -I believed all of this.

Last night from a shell-hole I saw your sky-I figured right then they had told me a lie.

Had I taken the time to see the things you made, I'd know they weren't calling a spade a spade.

I wonder, God, if you'd shake my hand. Somehow-I feel that you will understand.

Funny, I had to come to this hellish place, Before I had time to see your face.

Well, I guess there isn't much more to say But I'm sure glad, God, I met you today.

I guess the zero-hour will soon be here, But I'm not afraid since I know you are here.

The signal-well, God-I'll have to go, I like you lots-this I want you to know.

Looks like this will be a horrible



**14th Armored Division Assoc.
Vice President
Phil Snoberger**

fight. Who knows-I may come to your house tonight.

Though I wasn't friendly with you before, I wonder God- if you'd wait at your door-

Look-I am crying, me shedding tears, I wish I'd known you these many years.

Well, I'll have to go now, God-goodbye. Strange -since I met you - I'm not afraid to die.

Check out the website: <http://www.14tharmoreddivision.org>