



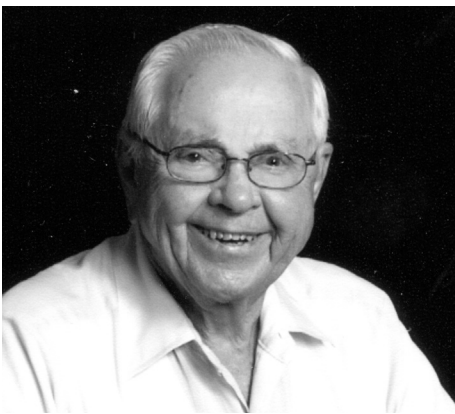
# THE LIBERATOR™

VOL. 46 NO. 1

Official Publication of the  
14th Armored Division Association

SUMMER 2011

## Greetings from our Association President



**CHUCK HURL**

Greetings from Northwest Arkansas where we have been having high winds, tornados and flooding during April.

My wife and I attended Southeast States Chapter annual meeting on January 28 and 29, in Orlando, Florida. It was a good meeting chaired by Bob McClarren. Phil Snoberger (co-chair) was unable to attend due to health related problems.

The author of "Battle Yet Unsung" (a book about the 14th A.D.) gave a talk on the trials and tribulations of getting a book published which was very interesting and informative. Another highlight was breakfast for the attendees at Arnold Palmer's Golf Course (Bay Hill) hosted by a 14th A.D. veteran and his wife.

Before adjourning, the attendees voted to have their next annual meet-  
(Continued on page 3)

## INDIANAPOLIS, HERE WE COME!

By Ann & Jess Chelette

September's almost here, and it's time to make reservations to attend our 47th National Reunion! We return to the Crowne Plaza International Airport Hotel for another great time together!

We've enjoyed your comments and suggestions for this year, and have put many of them into place. This September you'll find all activities on the ground floor - even the Hospitality Room! There will be no more than one buffet meal - at the most! Each day there will be several activities planned inside the hotel for those not taking bus tours!

Remember, if your room isn't to your satisfaction for any reason, you can be moved immediately to one that pleases you! Either contact the front desk or one of the "Partners", including Ann and Jess, who will be wearing red ribbons on our badges! Throughout the reunion we "Partners" will be available to assist you in any way - including all tours and programs, your luggage and check-in and -out, information, laundry, and phone calls!

Some of our planned activities are noted below, but additional offerings are in the works! We hope you each will choose those events that are most pleasurable for you! We promise there will be opportunities to speak with old and new friends, to rest from time to time, and enjoy the lovely Crowne Plaza!

### Thursday, September 15 -

- Our bus arrives at 9:30 am for an interesting time in lovely Indianapolis. If you're able to make it up and down the stairs, we'll stow your walker or wheelchair under the bus for your use during the tour. If you would like to make the trip by car, please let us know when you sign in at our Registration Table in the lobby - transportation will be provided for you.

- We'll travel to the home of the outstanding MDI Ceremonial Unit who highlighted our Memorial Service last September - the Joint Forces Headquarters of the National Guard. Our time there will be spent viewing historic vehicles and learning more about our National Guard responsibilities. You may remain on the bus, if you wish.

- We'll have lunch again this year in the cafeteria at the Indiana State Museum - a buffet for those who like to browse the sandwiches, salads, and soups, or we'll take your order and bring your food to your table! This meal is on your own for \$5-10 each.

- After lunch, you may choose how to spend your next hour. Some may like to remain at the outstanding Indiana State Museum. You can stroll through the remarkable museum displays, visit the charming gift shop, or relax on the terrace overlooking the canal and river walk. Others may wish

(Continued on page 3)

**47th NATIONAL REUNION**  
**Indianapolis, Indiana • September 14-18, 2011**

## FROM THE LADIES AUXILIARY PRESIDENT



**GAYLE SIEWERT**

### Greetings from Red Wing, Minnesota!

It looks like summer is on its way... finally. Spring was not very nice here with late snow and high waters, but there finally are signs of spring showing.

Plans sound wonderful for the reunion, September 14-18, 2011. The partners and officers are doing a wonderful job on the plans.

Ladies, please don't forget to bring snacks for the hospitality room, and the Auxiliary will provide the soft drinks. We will be having a raffle with money going to the VA hospital of Chuck Hurl's choice, so please bring a door prize or two.

I must tell you of a wonderful surprise I received in the mailbox recently. Along with the snow in February was a box all the way from Germany. I could not guess what it was, as I don't know anyone there. Inside were two beautiful wood puzzles with a note from Marianne Lohof who had read my letter in the last *Liberator*. She lives in Hallertau, Germany, and wanted to send two door prizes for the upcoming reunion. Her late husband, Ray F. Lohof, served with the 14th Armored Division. After the war, Ray worked in Germany for many years, he and his wife making their home there. How wonderful to hear from her!

Please don't forget to help the postage fund; send checks to Ann Lapo, Association treasurer. Change of addresses and notification of deaths should be sent to Ann Chelette, secretary. Ladies' Auxiliary dues of \$3.00 per year may be sent to Charlotte Froelich, auxiliary treasurer. Any news for the *Liberator* goes to Verlyn Hofer, editor.

*Continued on page 3*

*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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See Historian info.

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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.

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

(Continued from page 1)

ing in Orlando in January, 2012. I hope we can be there!

Enroute home from Florida, we stopped for a couple of days in New Orleans, LA, to visit the WWII Museum on Magazine St. As we were registering to tour the museum, I noticed a Sherman tank on the main floor with a group of people around it.

It was probably 1942 vintage (had a 75 mm canon). An old army veteran (volunteer) was explaining to a group of high school students how the tank operated and how tanks were used in WWII.

The museum and volunteers working there were very impressive. Maybe we should consider New Orleans for a

future reunion site.

On May 21, ninety-eight WWII veterans from Arkansas will be on an "Honor Flight" to Washington, D.C. We and our fifty "helpers" will visit the WWII Memorial, and return to Arkansas that evening. I am looking forward to this trip since all reports about Honor Flights have been excellent.

I've rambled on too long about my travels so now let's focus on 14th AD veterans and our Patriots Group. For all of you who are able, please plan to get in or on a plane, train, bus, car, motorcycle, or even a bicycle in time to get to The Grand Plaza International Hotel in Indianapolis, Indiana for our reunion on Sept. 14-18 this year!

I've read that eleven hundred WWII veterans die each day, so obvi-

ously we will not have too many more opportunities to get together as 14th A.D. veterans from WWII.

Ann and Jeff Chelette have a great reunion planned for you, so don't pass up this opportunity to have fun and to visit with your old comrades.

When you are preparing for your trip to Indianapolis don't forget to pack a gift for our annual raffle in the Hospitality Room. The VA Medical Center in Fayetteville, AR will benefit from this year's raffle.

My very best wishes to all of you and I hope to see many of you in Indianapolis.

Chuck Hurl

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## INDY, HERE WE COME...

(Continued from page 1)

to board the bus for the short trip to the National Headquarters of the American Legion. Their museum and library are remarkable testimonies to the Armed Forces of the United States.

- We'll not strand anyone! We'll return you to the hotel in the early afternoon in time for you to chat with friends in the hospitality room or rest a bit until the Early Bird Dinner. The Cash Bar opens at 5:00 pm, with the early dinner at 5:30 pm. As always we appreciate your tolerance of our meal times, whether you've arrived from New Jersey, California, or Wisconsin!

- Our hotel activities for the day will most likely take place in the hospitality room. At 9:30 am we'll have another chance to see the wonderful World War II movie, *Sound of Music*. At 1:30 pm we'll have a guest presenter - find out details at our Registration Table! Both events are free of charge.

### Friday, September 16 -

- Once again we'll board our bus at 9:30 am, unless other transportation is requested at registration. We'll drive the short distance to the White River Gardens adjacent to the Indianapolis Zoo. The gardens include a glass-enclosed conservatory, outdoor design gardens, water gardens, winding paths and walkways, and exciting exhibits! Seats will be provided for those wishing to relax among the lovely gardens.

- After lunch, you may return to

the Crowne Plaza or continue on to the remarkable Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art. We'll return museum-goers to the Crowne Plaza by 2:00 pm.

- Our hotel activities will again be interesting features of the reunion. At 10:00 am, we'll gather to view some fascinating collections brought to us by both friends and citizens of Indianapolis. At 2:00 pm, Mr. John Carrigan, a banker from Springfield, IL, whose mother was among those liberated by the 14th Armored Division, will share her touching story.

- Our evening Cash Bar opens at 5:00 pm, with dinner following at 6:00 pm. Again, all veterans will enjoy their meal free of charge!

### Saturday, September 17 -

- Our Saturday begins, as always, with our 9:00 am Memorial Service, once again in the Symposium on the first floor, to honor those we have lost since last we met.

- Following the service will be our meetings - veterans, Ladies Auxiliary, and Partners. Much business is transacted, and we encourage everyone to be present. Lunch will be on your own.

- After lunch activities will begin at 1:00 pm. From 1:00 - 3:00 pm, Mexican Train will be played at several tables in the Hospitality Room - join the fun whenever you wish!

- Also at 1:00 pm, Evan Scott, a scout seeking his Eagle Badge and the great-nephew of Stanley Goldman, will be present with his troop to meet

with veterans. His project is a display consisting of interviews, information, and memorabilia to be placed in the Holocaust Museum. Evan would appreciate interviews and the use of any memorabilia, including pictures, that could be shared with him. Sign up at our Registration Table to spend time with Evan and his fellow scouts.

- Those interested can also move on to a tour of Indianapolis' downtown Easley Winery, the NCAA Hall of Champions, or a downtown shopping excursion. Sign-up sheets will be at our Registration Table in the Lobby.

- Our grand evening begins with a Cash Bar at 5:00 pm and our banquet meal at 6:00 pm. President Chuck Hurl will emcee the evening and special entertainment is promised!

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## LADIES AUXILIARY

(Continued from page 2)

Wishing happy birthday and anniversary to all, and sincerest sympathies to all who have lost loved ones recently.

My mom, Frances Siewert, sends her best wishes to everyone. She is sorry that she will miss the reunion but hopes everyone has a great time.

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Have a safe and wonderful summer. We will see you in Indianapolis.

Sincerely,

Gayle Siewert

Auxiliary President

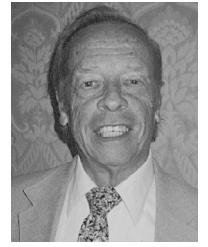




## THE CHAPLAIN'S COMMENTS

John A. Burgess

## WALKING WITH LINCOLN



In this period of history some men are saying that the United States of America was not founded upon Christian principles. However, the men who founded the United States were leaders that showed strong faith in God. They desired to make decisions that followed the expressed Word of God.

George Washington is said to have read the Bible daily, morning and evening, for an hour each time. He desired that his decisions conformed to biblical instructions. There was an Indian chief who said he believed Washington was protected by God. He said that during battles they fired at the man on the white horse. There was no way they could have missed, yet Washington was never hit.

Abraham Lincoln searched and studied the Bible daily, applying the instructions given to enable him to make daily political decisions. Daily he would take his decisions to his cabinet members, showing how divine instruction had determined his decisions.

As the lunar module pilot on the first lunar landing on July 20, 1969, Bruce Aldrin was the second person to walk on the moon. Aldrin had brought with him a tiny communion kit, given to him by his church. During the morning, he radioed "Houston, this is Eagle. I would like to request a few

moments of silence. I would like to invite each person listening... to contemplate for a moment the events of the last few hours, and to give thanks in his own individual way."

During the radio blackout, Aldrin took the communion elements and read John 15:5: I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, bears much fruit." Aldrin had been asked not to read the verse publicly because of the legal challenge NASA faced from famed atheist Madlyn O'Hair for the reading of the biblical creation story from Genesis during the Apollo 8 mission. It is incredible that one of the first American patriots to arrive on the moon was to worship God there. In God we still trust.

When in World War II, the platoon sergeant with whom I worked daily, would often say to me at the end of a day, "God was with us today."

My greatest desire as I perform the responsibilities of chaplain and provide these chaplain's comments, is

for everyone of us to grow in our ability to achieve the goals in which God has instructed us.

- Chaplain John A. Burgess

### CHAPLAIN BURGESS INJURED

Roberta Burgess, our chaplain's wife, informs that John fell on April 23 and broke his hip. He was in the hospital and as of mid May was in rehab doing well. However, at that time he still was in much pain. Those who wish to send get-well greetings to John may send cards to his home address: 116 Conant St., Beverly, MA 10915. His home phone number is 978-927-3432, and emails may be sent to jburg2055@aol.com or jburg2055@comcast.net. Many fellow Liberators and other friends hope and pray for John's rapid recovery. It is hoped that he and his wife will be able to attend the reunion in September.

One of my goals as Chaplain is to contact the widows and families of 14th members who die. Therefore, I would appreciate having each one of you inform me when you know of a death. I would also like to hear of any who are in the hospital, nursing home or confined to their own homes. Some of you are already doing this and I wish to thank you. I can be reached at the following:

## REUNION MEALS

### Breakfasts:

Complimentary cold breakfast buffet tickets will be given to no more than two room occupants for every morning of your stay. Should you need more tickets, please stop by our Registration Table in the Lobby. Coffee and juice are included in that complimentary ticket. You can upgrade to a hot breakfast buffet for just \$2 per ticket. Your server will collect your tickets and bring you

a bill, if necessary.

Also available is the A Cup Above Coffee Bar & Bakery, where Starbucks' Coffee and pastries are served each morning.

### Lunches:

If you're not lunching with us on a tour, you can enjoy lunch at either The Landing Restaurant in the Crowne Plaza or another site in Indianapolis.

Lunch suggestions and directions will be available at our Registration Table.

### Dinners:

Our evening meals will be in the Ballroom, where plate dinners will be served. This year Executive Director Gus Hinrich has provided free dinners for all veterans! Please join us for these gala events, followed by great entertainment.

## 47th TANK TRACKS

We (Joe and Mary Ann Cotten) have been absent along with the Tracks for several issues of *The Liberator*. Some illness in the family along with other issues have sort of limited our time. We are still able to travel some and do keep in touch with many friends.

Earlier this year (2011) we attended the SE Section Reunion in Florida and enjoyed our usual extended visit to Panama City Beach afterward. The Reunion was a nice informal gathering with about 20 people in attendance. During our 3-day stay we were all invited to a fabulous brunch at a very elegant setting in the Bay Hill Country Club. The brunch was sponsored by our friend, Tom McCoy, a veteran from the 62nd AIB, 14 AD. Tom and his wife, Margaret, hosted the event which, of course, was enjoyed by all. Thanks again to Tom and Margaret for a great time and the fabulous food.

The SE Reunion was again hosted and managed by Robert McClarren and his relative, Carol Lynn Wilson. The co-manager Philip Snoberger was unable to attend due to illness in the family. The National President Chuck Hurl and his wife, Betty, were among the guests there including Tim O'Keeffe, author of the book about the combat role of the 14th. There were a number of regulars not present for one reason or another, including Fred Shattuck, Marshall Whiteside, the Berman family, and perhaps others that I may have missed. The tentative plan

is to have the reunion again next year in the same hotel. Watch for more specifics in *The Liberator*. It is a fine place to sit back and unwind.

In early April we again had the pleasure of attending the Western (Pacific Coast) Chapter Reunion in Bull Head City, Arizona, on the eastern bank of the Colorado River. Hotel reservations were also available on the immediate west side of the river in Laughlin, Nevada, where casinos are plentiful, and I might add, a popular pastime.

Joe Fitts again handled the details of the program which included two sit-down evening meals at a very nice restaurant in Bull Head City. We met in a separate room with plenty of seating space for the group (about 20 people) and there was time before and after the meals for plenty of visiting, chatting and camaraderie in general. The 47th Tk was represented by the Cottens - D Co., Richard and Barbara Horton - C Co., and Donald and Annette Clark - Hqs 47th. Gus Hinrich and Doris were present along with our Association Historian, Jim Lankford.

We missed seeing several regulars including the Mellos, Frank and Bernita Fulmer, and members of the Lagunas family. Kent Fulmer and wife, Susan, did show up and gave us greetings and a report from Frank and Bernita.

A special thanks to Joe Fitts for his work in getting things done before and at the reunion. It is my understanding the re-

union will again be held next year at the same location. It is a great place to attend a reunion and perhaps do an extended vacation. Vegas is only about 100 miles north.

I have mentioned before the nice interesting drive through the desert and snow-capped mountains in New Mexico and Arizona. We usually travel along parts of I-10, I-20 and I-40, but on our return this year (2011), thanks to Mary Ann's suggestion, after leaving Vegas, we decided to take a north and eastern route through part of Utah and through the Rockies of Colorado - not a wise move. We encountered a snow storm along Highway 50 from Montrose to Gunnison and continuing most of the way to Pueblo. Part of the way the temperatures dropped to 20 degrees with blinding snow at times. We were able to follow snow plows most of the way over the major higher passes. Certainly the scenery was beautiful, but not good for driving. Next time I think we will stick to the southern route.

Hope to see many of our good friends at the National Reunion in September 2011.

- Joe Cotten



# Thanks Liberators for Saving His Mother

To her Knights in Shining Armor,

That is how my mother would have asked me to address this message, as that is how I, along with some of my sisters remember her referring to the brave young men who saved her life.

My name is John Carrigan and I am the son of a Nazi Labor Camp Survivor thanks only to the Liberators. I am a Vice President at a Mortgage Company and the President of The WWII Illinois Veterans Memorial Board of Directors. Our group has been responsible for the planning, construction and finally the dedication of a 1.4 million dollar Memorial ensuring that the brave men and women from Illinois who served during this epic conflict would never be forgotten. In addition to the Memorial we have set up a Scholarship Fund that is exclusively for descendants of WWII Veterans to help them with higher education. A few years ago we started The Illinois Classroom Project. This process allows high school students from Illinois to interview and digitally record WWII Veterans stories and preserve them for generations to come. All of these stories are going into The Library of Congress.

My mother was born in the Alsace Loraine Region of France August 31, 1923 and had left the area with some of her family when the war began (she was about 16 years old). She along with other members of her family (she would not talk about it) were later captured in central France (Metz we believe), loaded on to a train, (she referred

to them as cattle cars) and ultimately sent to Wildflecken, Germany.

She was very young and beautiful, it was a time in her life when most young women look forward to their promising future but hers instead was one of peril and hopelessness. We are a little unsure of the date she entered the Camp but remember her sparingly mentioning that she was forced to put down cobble stones to create paths for the many horses that Hitler had at this camp. Additionally she would mention times when she worked at the ammunition building with the powder and shells while armed guards stood behind her and others ensuring they (the POW's) completed the task correctly. This continued on and on and I can only imagine the fear, and sorrow that she felt, along with the hundreds of others, that believed I am sure, that their lives were now committed to the oppression of the Nazi regime, forever. I actually still to this day feel such great sorrow for her and the others as I type this message. I only more readily understood her pain as I grew older, had children of my own and would inquire about her life only to be offered very small if any pieces of information about her life in the Labor Camp.

As I mentioned above, I have dedicated the last 10 years of my life, since her death in January 2001, to ensuring America will never forget The Greatest Generation. It has been a more general approach but done with heartfelt intent in thanking them for



saving my blessed mother's life. Today, is a more adjusted focus in that I have indeed found The 14th Armored Division – The Liberators – my goodness, the heartfelt thanks that I offer each of you, you may never know. Just let me offer you this: your efforts mattered, they made a difference, they changed the direction of my mother's life. They in fact offered her just that "life" and as a result she met a young soldier after you liberated her camp. She married him, came to America on a ship called The Jarrett Huddleston where she entered in to New York Harbor and saw for the first time The Statue of Liberty.

She had six children with my dad and now there are grandchildren and great-grandchildren on the way. Liberators, God Bless You, Thank You for your sacrifice, you made a difference.

You did not just protect these United States, you also "Delivered Freedom Around the World."

John Carrigan  
Vice President,  
Buyer Manager  
Mandatory Trade Desk

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# BOOK REVIEW of "BATTLE YET UNSUNG"

by James Lankford, National Historian

*Battle Yet Unsung: The Fighting Men of the 14th Armored Division in World War II*, by Timothy J. O'Keeffe. Haverstown, PA: Casemate Publishers, 2010. ISBN 978-1-935149-44-6. Photographs. Maps. Appendix. Index. Notes. Pp. vii, 320. \$32.95

Dr. O'Keeffe is a retired professor of English literature who specializes in the writings of John Milton. He is married to the sister of a now deceased veteran of the 14th Armored Division. Impressed by the various stories he heard during a visit to the 14th Armored Division Association's regional reunion in Florida, and disturbed by the perceived lack of published information about the division and its men, Dr. O'Keeffe decided to correct this oversight. This reviewer does not doubt the author's sincerity, or the worthiness of his goal.

*Battle Yet Unsung*, covers the combat history of the division from its landing at Marseilles, France in late October, 1944 until shortly after VE-Day. A work of this type consists basically of two primary components. The first is the overall historical context of the subject. The second is the eyewitness accounts of veterans. The context serves as a vehicle for the latter, although they are mutually supporting. Resultantly, should one fail to do its job, it often compromises the integrity of the other. In this case there is good news and bad news. The

good news is this -- the veterans' stories, many of which were previously published, provide invaluable insights into the division's history. They remain undiminished in their importance, and untarnished by the many cracks and holes in the historical framework that surrounds them. The latter is, of course, the bad news because there is no shortage of historical errors to be found in the book.

After reading the first two thirds of the book, the review notes contained more than seven pages of verified errors. At that point I stopped recording each and every mistake, and resorted to the expedient of addressing only those errors which seemed to be especially far off the mark. These errors run the entire gamut of possibilities from the misidentification of battalions, divisions, and corps, to getting wrong the names and ranks of officers, both German and American. Even dates and locations are sometimes incorrect, as are some technical descriptions such as the size of individual units, and the types and capabilities of the weapons employed by armored divisions. Here are just a few examples.

In his introduction Dr. O'Keeffe claims a patrol of the 68th Armored Infantry Battalion crossed the Lauter River into Germany in November 1944. This did not occur in November. The entire division was still many miles to the south in early December, and did not ar-

rive on the banks of the Lauter until mid-month.

The map opposite page 1, titled "Route of the 14th Armored Division, Nov-Dec 1944" depicts the farthest point of the division's advance during that time period as the Rhine River at Germersheim, Germany. The division did not reach Germersheim until 24 March 1945.

A few pages on, the author introduces a parenthetical note that an armored infantry battalion had "almost 700 men." This too, is incorrect. An armored infantry battalion employed slightly over 1,000 men.

Further on Dr. O'Keeffe tells his readers the 847th Tank Destroyer Battalion was attached to the 14th Armored Division. This is an especially unfortunate claim as the U.S. Army did not have an 847th Tank Destroyer Battalion at any time in its history.

The author makes a similar mistake when he identifies a battalion of the "SS Felderrnhalle Division" as the unit defending Barr, France. However, there was no "SS Felderrnhalle Division" in the German military. There was a regular army unit with this name -- Panzer Division Felderrnhalle, but it never fought on the Western Front. For the record, the 106th Panzer Brigade, which according to one source carried the nickname "Felderrnhalle," along with the 280th Assault Gun Battalion, and Division Buercky were de-

*(Continued on page 9)*

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## BOOK REVIEW

(Continued from page 8)

fending the north shoulder of the German line which included the areas surrounding Barr and Erstein.

Referring to the 16 January entry in General Jacob L. Devers' official diary in which he mentions the 6th SS Mountain, 7th Parachute, and the 10th SS Panzer Divisions, Dr. O'Keeffe writes the following: "It is puzzling that Devers could be so confident of things on the 16th, when the very enemy divisions he was citing were causing such trouble in the Hatten-Rittershoffen sector, where the 14th Armored and units of the 79th and 42nd Infantry Divisions were fighting a desperate battle for their very existence." Of the major combat units referred to by Dr. O'Keeffe, only the 20th Regiment, 7th Parachute Division was engaged in the Hatten-Rittershoffen area. The 10th SS was operating against VI Corps' right flank along the Rhine, and the 6th SS was fighting the 45th Infantry Division on the far left flank in the vicinity of Wingen. Furthermore, despite the author's claim, what remained of the two battalions of the 242nd Infantry Regiment, 42nd Infantry Division that initially defended Hatten and Rittershoffen were withdrawn for reorganization on 11 January. Reportedly a handful of men from these battalions continued fighting in these towns for several more days, but it is completely wrong to say the 42nd was still fighting in the two

towns on 16 January.

While on the subject of the 42nd Infantry Division, it must be noted that on more than one occasion Dr. O'Keeffe quotes Dr. Richard Engler, the author of the excellent book, *The Final Crisis*, as an eyewitness to the fighting in Hatten and Rittershoffen. However, Dr. Engler served in the 2nd Battalion, 222nd Infantry Regiment which was located at Soultz de Forets, some ten miles distant. In addition, Dr. Engler does not claim to have been present at any time during the fighting at Hatten and Rittershoffen.

I cannot leave behind the Battle of Hatten-Rittershoffen without pointing out two serious oversights by Dr. O'Keeffe. He tells his readers the 1st Platoon, Company A, 48th Tank Battalion and Troop C, 94th Cavalry Squadron received what he refers to as "citations" for their actions there on 9 January 1945. But he does not bother to mention that these "citations" are actually Distinguished Unit Citations (later known as the Presidential Unit Citation) -- the highest award available to any unit of the US military. As an indicator of its relative importance the same award was made to the 101st Airborne Division for its famously heroic defense of Bastogne during the Battle of the Bulge. To be fair, the correct name of the award is buried in the endnotes of the book, but even then it is conveyed only in the citation of an article that previously appeared in *The Liberator*. It appears that Dr. O'Keeffe does not discuss

the importance of these awards because he does not appreciate their true significance. To make matters worse he fails to mention the 3rd Platoon, Troop E, 94th Cavalry Squadron as one of the division's units that received Presidential Unit Citations for their actions on 9 January.

The book relies heavily on previously published sources. In particular, the author draws extensively on material found in *The Liberator* and Joseph Carter's *History of the 14th Armored Division*. For example, in three consecutive chapters alone Dr. O'Keeffe cites Carter no less than 60 times!

Although the structural outline of the book is generally sound, its many errors and periodic lack of continuity do a rather poor job in accurately portraying the division's combat history. This is not to say the veterans' accounts found in the book are mistaken or unimportant. Far from it -- they provide important and valuable eyewitness testimony -- but alone cannot overcome the book's many other shortcomings.

Dr. O'Keeffe's effort to honor the men of the 14th Armored Division is much less impressive than it might have been had he developed a stronger working knowledge of the subject and fully mastered the relevant sources before putting fingers to keyboard. Regrettably, I cannot recommend *Battle Yet Unsung* to anyone who has a genuine interest in the combat history of the division.

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# STRANDED IN AN ENEMY TOWN

by Robert D. Quinn (C-68)

From the autobiography entitled "My Best Trip"

*Editor's Note: We are saddened by the news of Dr. Quinn's recent death as reported in this issue of The Liberator.*

The war was nearly over. It was the middle of April 1945, and the German Army was in full retreat. The 14th Armored Division, as part of the Third Army, had breached the Siegfried Line, fought across Germany and crossed the Rhine River. We fought through Frankfurt and Aschaffenburg and then turned north. We battled across the mountains near Fulda and then swung south toward Nürnberg following the autobahn. For a country boy from Idaho, the autobahn highway was an impressive display of German engineering.

The war was nearly over and the sporadic fighting became less and less. The character of the war was changing. We rolled down the autobahn with occasional sharp encounters with SS Troops who were fighting a rear-guard action. The German strategy then was to delay our advance until they could build an impregnable fortress in the Bavarian Alps. They believed that, if they could hold out long enough, when the allied forces from England, France and the United States met the Russians coming from the east, they would begin fighting over the spoils of war and forget the Germans.

As the army rolled south along the autobahn toward Nürnberg, we fanned out to occupy strategic communication and transportation centers along our flanks. We were assigned to a small detachment to investigate and secure a village in the mountains to the east of the autobahn. Our task force consisted of two tanks, three half-tracks and a reconnaissance car to check out the village and occupy it if there was no trouble.

Our armored salient headed down the narrow paved road which wound from the autobahn toward the village. As we approached the village, we became cautious. Sergeant Rangold had our squad dismount and we moved in assault formation up the side of a hill to reconnoiter. Our task force waited

behind us in the forest. We emerged at the top of a ridge looking down on the hamlet. There was no visible activity.

As we watched the town through our field glasses, a strange series of events happened, which I still do not understand 50 years later. We saw three American 3/4 ton trucks coming from the village driving toward us. The trucks had drivers in American uniforms but they were filled with German soldiers who had their weapons with them. They were American trucks with American drivers so we could not call for artillery or tank fire until we verified if they were friend or foe. Because the trucks were filled with armed German soldiers, we had to be cautious. The trucks continued slowly towards where we sat watching. We had to identify them and learn their intentions. Sergeant Rangold beckoned me to follow him and we ran down through the trees and positioned ourselves in the open beside the road.

The truck drivers saw us and stopped about 200 yards away. German soldiers were in back of the trucks pointing their weapons toward us. Everyone was waiting to see what the other side was going to do. A fight was about to begin and we were sitting ducks. We were about to run for cover, when suddenly, our reconnaissance car emerged from the forest behind us. We knew our tanks were behind him. It was decision time.

When the drivers saw the reconnaissance car, they backed to turn around in the middle of the road. The recon car pulled up beside us and was radioing for the tanks to fire on the trucks. I ran to the recon vehicle yelling that these were American trucks driven by men in American uniforms and we should hold fire until we knew for sure who they were. By then the trucks had turned around and were speeding back into the village. The officer in the recon car decided he needed to chase them to identify them as friend or foe. There was no room for me inside, so he yelled at me to crawl

up on the back.

The recon car was smooth on top but there was a flat surface over the engine and a number of handholds. The driver battened down his hatches and took off with me hanging on. I fought to hold on to my rifle and helmet and still maintain my precarious grip on the back of the swaying car. The road was rough and I hung on for dear life.

The trucks sped through the village with us in hot pursuit. The streets were narrow and winding. I was having trouble clinging to the back of the car. We roared through the village and were soon out the other side. The trucks were then only 300 yards ahead of us, and raising clouds of dust.

As we burst out the other side of the village, we saw a cemetery beside the road. Behind the wall of the cemetery was the muzzle of a German 88. This cannon had killed many of our buddies, shattered countless tanks, and had struck fear into every American soldier. The driver screeched to a halt and made a 180 degree turn. Reconnaissance cars were not equipped to deal with a German 88, their job was to reconnoiter, not to fight. The driver's duty was to get back and give his report. Combat units would do the fighting.

In his haste, the driver must have forgotten I was on the back of the car. He tore through the hamlet. The vehicle skidded and swayed on the sharp turns. I was clawing at the hand holds, but lost my grip, tumbled off, and rolled into a pile in the middle of the square. My field jacket and winter clothes padded my fall as I bounced over the cobblestones. Fighting instinct made me cling to my rifle. My helmet went clattering across the cobblestones, bouncing and clanging until it hit the side of a building. The fleeing car disappeared in a plume of dust, and I was alone in the center of the village square.

Experience had taught me that survival depends on fast reaction. I jumped up and crouching over, zig-

*(Continued on page 11)*

## STRANDED...

(Continued from page 10)

zagged toward a small alleyway beside a building, ready to fight. My buddies would come and get me out of this if I could hold out. Across the square were two large hotels with red crosses painted on the side. The windows were full of German soldiers in uniform – watching me. However, they were not pointing weapons. As I peered around the corner of the building at them, I saw that most were heavily bandaged and many had splints on their arms. The hotels were apparently being used as temporary hospitals for the wounded. I watched them. They watched me. No one was shooting.

Minutes ticked by. The tension grew as I waited. A rotund man wearing a white apron emerged from a large house beside the square. He ran toward me waving a white flag yelling, "Nicht schiessen, Nicht schiessen! Kamerad! Nicht schiessen!" They were surrendering the village to me. They wanted it to be an open city because of the wounded soldiers in the makeshift hospital, and I was the first American soldier they had seen.

I cautiously came out of the alleyway and approached the man waving the white flag. His apron meant he was probably the local baker. My rifle was pointed at his stout belly. He sputtered over and over that he was the burgermeister. I understood only a few of the words, but I had seen this process many times since we arrived in Germany.

I waved toward the German soldiers and the hospitals and asked if they had rifles. The burgermeister answered with a vigorous, "Nein!" He waved for me to follow and led me to his house which I recognized was also the bakery. I followed him cautiously into the house with my gun at his back. His front room was full of stacks of rifles. More were in the bedroom. He kept saying the soldiers were unarmed and these were all of their guns. I was cautious. I was still in a naked vulnerable position.

We were all souvenir hunting, since the war was nearly over. I asked, "Haben Sie Pistole?"

He looked at me and answered, "Ja, Ja." Then he reached under his

bed and pulled out a large wicker basket. It was full of pistols, a combat infantryman's dream come true. There must have been 20 or 30 pistols in the basket. This booty became more important than the rest of the village. It was so heavy I could hardly lift it. I lugged it out into the square. I would fight for those pistols.

The reconnaissance car roared back to our unit. Sergeant Rangold saw the back of the car was empty and realized that I had been left behind. Immediately everyone mobilized. In a combat unit, loyalty to your fellow soldier is an overwhelming obligation. The word spread throughout the unit that "Quinn's still in the village. We got to go in and get Quinn."

The two tanks led and three half-tracks trailed as they roared down the road into the village. All guns had shells in their chamber and safeties off. They stormed into the town square and the tanks and half-tracks deployed to confront the German soldiers in the hotels. Everyone was wary and expecting a battle. It was tense. Fingers were on triggers. Narrowed eyes peered down ready gun barrels. Who would fire the first shot?

At that moment, I came out of the doorway carrying my basket of loot, helmetless, rifle slung over my shoulder, oblivious of danger. All eyes turned toward me. Immediately the war was forgotten. The hunger for souvenirs became dominant. Tankers came piling out. Half-tracks emptied as the infantrymen charged toward me and my hoard of pistols.

The watching Germans must have thought American soldiers were crazy. Soldiers abandoned tanks and half-tracks to chase me down the small lane. About 30 armed soldiers pursued me as I fled with my treasure. They surrounded me. I climbed on top of a dung pile arguing plaintively that these were my pistols. But I had to share.

The custom was that all trophies must be shared. The first man got his choice, then everyone divided up the rest. I dug into the basket of pistols to see which one looked the most interesting. Near the bottom was a Luger in a beautiful holster appearing to be in excellent condition. I pulled it out,

clutched it to my chest, put it inside my field jacket, then handed the basket to my rescuers who promptly grabbed up the pistols that remained.

It was a crazy war. I walked out of the alleyway into the town square. Sergeant Rangold spotted me and yelled and berated me in typical "Sergeant yelling at a stupid recruit language." He told me it was crazy to have crawled up on the recon car. He told me how stupid I was and how lucky I was to be alive. He said repeatedly that I would never survive the war because of all the crazy things I did. It was a routine that Sergeant Rangold and I had repeated many times. It didn't bother me. I felt the pistol inside my field jacket, clutched to my chest. At that moment, it was one of the most valuable things I owned and worth the risk I had taken.

Finally Rangold tired of yelling and told me to go find my helmet. It took a few minutes to find my helmet. It was bent and scratched from clattering across the cobblestones. Again Sergeant Rangold castigated me for the condition of my helmet and for not taking better care of my equipment. I knew better than to answer.

We never found the 88 seen in the cemetery. It had disappeared, or maybe we had only seen a broken tree stump. We never learned who rode in those trucks or who controlled them. I still wonder about it to this day.

\* \* \*

Twenty-five years later I visited Germany with two of my children. I took them down the autobahn below Fulda and found the still remembered roadway stretching out to the east. Many things had changed. A new highway had been built to the town, but the old road was still there to follow. Nearby, a camp of American soldiers and an armored division with hundreds of tanks guard the Fulda Gap. The town had more than doubled in size, but the town square was the same. Where there had been two German hospitals, there was a beautifully decorated gästhaus and a hotel. It was then that I first learned the name of the town. And the Luger is still a prized souvenir that reminds me of the time I was stranded in an enemy town. ■

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# OVERSEAS VOYAGE AND INVASION OF THE 14TH AD

BY TIMOTHY O'KEEFFE

*EDITOR'S NOTE: The following was written as part of the book "Battle Yet Unsung" by Timothy O'Keeffe, but was not included in the published work. Because the article contains some interesting accounts by Bob McClarren and other members of the 14th Armored Division, we have decided to reprint this chapter here for readers of The Liberator.*

The men of the 68th Armored Infantry Battalion, of which Bob Davies was a member, embarked on the SS Lejeune on 14 October, 1944 in New York Harbor and had to wait another day for the sailing to what was then an unknown destination. Secrecy was all important because of the possible danger of German submarines although the danger had been mightily reduced in the past year or so by the combined naval and air services of the United States, Canada, and Britain. For all the men knew, they might have been headed for the Pacific Theater of Operations. They had been waiting at Camp Shanks at Orangeburg, New York up the Hudson River for days for a train ride to New York City. There they were transferred to Staten Island, where they boarded ship.

The battalion belonged to the 14th Armored Division, which had been activated on 15 November 1942 at Camp Chaffee, Arkansas. Most of the men had received infantry or other specialized training before training as units of a modern armored division, with its tanks, half-tracks, armored cars, jeeps, trucks, and other vehicles. A small number of them had partaken in the ASTP program, which was the Army Special Training Program, designed to select those who had the aptitude for college education or who had already been at college and to educate them in such areas as mechanical engineering. The program was designed to rectify a serious problem which arose with the heavy casualties of World War I. Too many young men who were bright or gifted had been lost in the grinding attrition of trench warfare, and it was necessary to select for such a program those who were of special value both to the armed forces and to the nation and save them for the future. Many

of these young men would become, in World War II, noncommissioned or commissioned officers after the program was closed due to the terrible casualties after the Normandy invasion and the costly fighting in the hedgerows. Both Bob Davies and his good friend Phil Snoberger, who had been assigned to study at the University of Cincinnati, were taken from there and assigned to the 14th Armored Division. Bob would later become a sergeant in B Company of the 68th Armored Infantry Battalion.

All this lay in the future. For the GIs dragging their duffel bags and gear up the gangplank of the SS Lejeune, all they were concerned with was what was going to happen on board and what kind of accommodations they would or would not have. They didn't learn at the time that their ship was originally a German vessel that went by the name of the *Windhuk*. After the start of hostilities, it had been interned in a South American port and turned over to US authorities. There is a picture of it in one of the issues of the 14th Armored's newsletter, *The Liberator*, which was published well after the war. The comment under the picture was "Remember how seasick some of you guys got and what a fun trip it was? Well here is a picture of your LOVE BOAT, formerly known as the German liner 'Windhuk'."

The recollections of some of the men didn't always agree as to the salient details from the time the men were packed into the trains on the New York Central's West Shore Line at Orangeburg, New York on the west side of the Hudson River. The division had traveled across the country from Camp (now Fort) Campbell, Kentucky before which they had trained at Fort Chaffee. The division had participated in the now famous Louisiana Maneuvers and had discovered how much more they had to learn as members of an armored division.

The division had spent only a brief time at Camp Shanks before staging to New York Harbor. Much of the following account of the 25 mile trip south to the big city is based on the recollection and research of Robert McClarren, a

veteran sergeant of the 25th Tank Battalion of the 14th. As his story starts,

"With chalked numbers on our helmets indicating the order in which we would board our troopships later in the day, we hoisted our duffel bags to our shoulders and marched to the camp's railroad yard. Awaiting us were empty coaches... Loaded, the trains took us South the 20 (to 25) miles to the Weehawken, New Jersey Ferry Terminal. As we detrained and walked through the barn-like terminal, a military band played and a group of women (probably Red Cross) passed out candies."

Red Cross volunteers, usually women, stationed themselves all over the country at docks, airfields, bus and train depots, anywhere they could to support the men going overseas with coffee, lemonade flavored soda, donuts, candies, and cookies.

McClarren's account continues:

"At the Hudson side of the terminal were traditional open ended, double-ended vehicular and pedestrian carrying ferry boats, which carried thousands a day to their jobs in Manhattan a mile across the Hudson River. However, because of the haze and fog that blanketed the water (on the evening of 13 November), few, if any of our ferry borne folks, could see any evidence of the big city or anything else in the harbor."

McClarren made a point of this because some of the veterans remembered or thought they remembered seeing the Statue of Liberty, part of Manhattan, and waterside Brooklyn. They may have seen these sights on their fortunate return from the war in 1945 or 1946.

In any case, "We stood closely packed on the boat, with those in front pressed against the closed expansion gate at the very prow of the ferry, a step away from the water. For some of those who had not experienced a boat ride (before), there was a bit of nervousness – was this the ship we were going to sea on?"

The ferry ride was rather lengthy, nine miles down the Hudson River and across Upper New York Bay to

*(Continued on page 13)*

## OVERSEAS VOYAGE...

(Continued from page 12)

the docks at the Port of Embarkation (POE) at St. George/Tompkinsville, Staten Island, New York, adjacent to The Narrows, the exit (out of) New York Harbor. In that late, hazy autumn afternoon, the ferry docked adjacent to the gangplank of our ship, the Santa Rosa (one of four ships carrying the men of the 14th). There we left the ferry in the order of our helmet-chalked numbers. Approaching a clerk at the foot of the Santa Rosa's portal, the clerk called out each of our last names. We responded with our first name and middle initial – or if we didn't have the latter, the response was NMI for 'no middle initial.' The men wore no shoulder patch for security reasons – not to inform the German intelligence, the Abwehr, that a new armored division was on the way to fight against the Wehrmacht. "In the morning (on the 14th) we were allowed on deck; under a grey sky but with a calm sea, we found ourselves in the convoy assembled for the trip."

McClarren, an intelligent and observant man, would later retire as a Major of Infantry after serving in the Korean War. He makes it clear that his version of the embarkation differs from the unit history of the 14th written by Capt. Joseph Carter, who also served in the division, which described the embarkation in this fashion:

"The land slipped past Coney Island, then it was a shore line against the western sky, the men felt the full, fresh sea breeze for the first time, the ship began to lift to the onshore swell, and the first of the men were seasick. Darkness fell, and the 14th Armored Division was at sea."

McClarren emphasizes the differences between his recollections, reinforced by many discussions over the years with fellow veterans, and the recollection of Captain Carter;

"1) Witnessed concur that the harbor trip was not sunny, but was in haze and fog;

2) there was no convoy movement down the harbor on Saturday (or any other day except Sunday) as within the space of a very busy commercial (not to mention wartime) harbor, it would have been impossible to organize/move a convoy;

3) the convoy, had it been orga-

nized, couldn't have sailed past the Statue of Liberty, because the ships which would form the convoy were at berths waiting to be loaded 4 miles south and past the "Old Lady"; and

4) the ships left their berths, moved through the Narrows and joined the other ships far offshore (out of sight of land) to make the convoy...

"At this point we didn't know specifically where we were going. Because we were shipping out of New York and no armored divisions had been sent to the Pacific—the need for a major combat tank unit was not there, we were sure we were going to Europe. But where: England, France, the Mediterranean, a new front in the Balkans?"

"The greatest immediate concern for many was seasickness (mal de mere). Although the seas were not challenging, the absence of today's gyroscopic ship levelers and of Dramamine and other seasickness medicines left us to nature. The crowded, airless, near-fetid holds, and the noise of the sickness exacerbated the illness. The fact that nearly everyone had the discomfort gave us little ease in our own moments of discomfort. There were relief pails near our bunks, but unless you were bunk-ridden, you tried to make it up three or four vertical steps, across the deck, and to the rail before it was too late. Guards were stationed near the rails with the duty of grabbing the sick GI's web belt to keep him from following his vomit over the rail. Then, there was one more sea hazard; hopefully your point of relief was not directly under or just slightly downwind from the sick fellow on the deck above! In a day or two, the sickness generally passed, but the chief medical noncom in the 25th Tank Battalion couldn't leave his bunk until we got to Marseilles."

"The History reports 18 ships in the convoy. There were four troopships: the Santa Rosa, a former South American cruise ship, which carried the three tank battalions and the Division's Headquarters, including the Commanding General, Albert Smith, and the staff party; the LeJeune... which carried the three armored infantry battalions [including Bob Davies' unit, the 68th]; the General James Parker, the former liner 'Panama,' on which the cavalry Recon battalion, the 94th, the

125th Combat Engineers, and ordnance troops shipped; and the Sea Robin, a new trooper, which carried the artillery battalions [the 499th, 500th, and 501st], the 84th Medical Battalion... and the MP's. The fourteen freighters, including some Liberty Ships, had the 14th's medium tanks (no jeeps, light tanks, half-tracks, and trucks were left behind), as well as other materials."

"But there were more than 18 ships in our convoy! We had a naval escort. It had a Jeep or Escort Carrier (with approximately a dozen planes aboard, to be put aloft in the event of a submarine alert or attack). It had at least one (and possibly two) destroyer or destroyer escort accompaniments—I saw at least one. There also were two mystery ships which we could see as small, close together dots on the far horizon ahead. Someone said that they were minesweepers, and as I found out only a few years ago, that's what they were. At the time my knowledge of minesweepers was of WWI, when minesweepers snared a heavy steel cable holding tethered mines. This permitted the mines to float freely to the surface, where sharpshooters with sniper rifles could detonate them. But here the Atlantic Ocean reached depths of some thousands of feet, and tethered mines were inconceivable. A few years ago I met a WWII minesweeper veteran. The answer from him: they were dragging sonar detectors on cables for floating mines. With the addition of these naval ships, our convoy numbered at least 21 and perhaps 22 ships."

"We were well prepared to meet any U-Boat threat. Each one of us had our Mae West life jackets, with a waterproof marker and light attached to the vest. We had only one dry-run, abandon-ship drill, which came off successfully by the book. We had aerial cover of one sort or another during the entire trip. There were naval submarine patrol blimps and aircraft for the first couple of days out. When we passed south of Bermuda (a British colony with American bases [a part of President Roosevelt's Lend Lease program]), we had airplane cover, and as we approached Gibraltar, there was more aircraft cover. Fate also helped in that the month of October, 1944 saw the fewest sinkings of the entire war-worldwide.

(To be continued next issue.)

# REUNION RESERVATION • 14th ARMORED DIVISION ASSOCIATION

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MAN'S FIRST NAME	\$15.00	<i>VETS FREE</i> \$28.00	\$30.00	<i>VETS FREE</i> \$28.00	<i>VETS FREE</i> \$32.00	\$
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- I will be flying to the Reunion, arriving \_\_\_\_\_
- Special diets: \_\_\_\_\_
- Need wheelchair for events #1 and #3
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- o **FROM THE NORTH:** HWY 65. Take exit #123 toward airport; take exit 11 for Sam Jones Expy E/Sam Jones Expy W; keep right at the fork to ward Sam Jones Expy and merge onto it. Turn left at S. High School Rd, make U-turn to Crowne Plaza.
- o **FROM THE EAST:** I-70 W. Take exit #75 to merge onto Sam Jones Expy; turn left at S High School Rd, make U-turn to Crowne Plaza.
- o **FROM THE SOUTH:** I-70 E. Take exit #69 for I-465 S.I-74 E; keep left at the fork, follow signs for I-70 E/I-465 N/I-74 W and merge onto I-70 E. Take exit 73B to merge onto I-465 N/I-74 W; take exit 11B toward and merge onto Sam Jones Expy; turn left at S High School Rd, make a U-turn to Crowne Plaza.

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City/State/ZIP:		Plus state & local taxes, currently 17%	
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Will arrive:	Day:	Date:	
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Type of Payment:	Credit Card	Check	Money Order
Credit card type, number and expiration:			
Signature of card holder:			

## Some Pictures from the War

In early April 1945 when the pictures below were taken by 7th Army combat photographers, the 14th Armored Division was moving across Germany at a rapid pace. There may still be some readers of *The Liberator* who remember the sights depicted here.



Medics of the 14th Armored Division are shown here giving aid to a wounded German soldier who was hit during the fight for Steinback, Germany on about April 4, 1945. Note tank in background.



Members of Co. C, 62nd AIB wait at the foot of the bridge at Germunden, Germany for the order to attack the town after the artillery softens up their objective on April 6, 1945.



Co. C infantrymen under sniper fire as they dash through a street of Germunden, Germany.



The photographer snapped this picture just as a shell exploded to the front of a 62nd AIB jeep (peep). Doesn't look like the safest place to drive through the town of Germunden. The sign at the left of the picture reads "Drogerie." Does anyone know what that meant?



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## 14th Armored Division Vet Was Big Washington News Maker

Donald C. Alexander, who died in February of 2009, is likely remembered by members of Battery A of the 500th AFA, 14th AD, as a well respected officer and comrade. But by those interested in national government affairs, Alexander, former IRS chief, is remembered as the public servant who battled the Nixon administration.

Captain Alexander served as a forward artillery observer during the European campaign and likely was thereby toughened in for the formidable tasks he faced as head of the IRS while dealing with the excesses of those in power. He was a life member of the 14th AD Assoc., living to be 87 years old. Many vets of the 14th AD went on in civilian life to excell in their fields of endeavor, and many gained considerable recognition. However, it is doubtful that any "made the news" as much as did Alexander during the Nixon years when he found himself at odds with the president and his administration.

The following are excerpts from a news article written by Patricia Sullivan at the time of Alexander's death. If any of our readers have memories of Donald Alexander and would care to add their comments in a "Mail Bag" article, we would like to hear from them.

XXXXX

• Reporting from Washington – Donald C. Alexander, the Internal Revenue Service commissioner who successfully fought the Nixon administration's attempts to use tax audits and investigations to punish its political enemies, died of cancer Tuesday at his home in Washington, D.C. He was 87.

Alexander ran the IRS from 1973 to 1977, when the agency came under severe public scrutiny for its earlier role in investigating political opponents and radicals on the far right and left. Alexander, a prominent tax lawyer when he took the IRS job, learned the day after his swearing-in of a secret band of IRS investigators who combed through the tax returns of 3,000 "notorious" groups and 8,000 individuals.

Within three months, he ordered

the unit disbanded, saying that political views "extremist or otherwise, are irrelevant to taxation," he wrote in a 1999 editorial for the publication Tax Notes. "The evening of the same day, President Nixon made his first effort to fire me."

Alexander refused to launch tax audits of those on Nixon's infamous "enemies list," blocked an effort by the Agriculture Department to obtain the tax returns of all American farmers and sharply curtailed IRS participation in federal investigations into drug trafficking, organized crime and white collar crime. He repeatedly urged Congress to stiffen taxpayer confidentiality laws, which it did in 1976.

He later said restrictions on seeing tax returns were so lax that the IRS ran virtually "a lending library" of private tax data, and governors sometimes were shown tax records of their opponents.

Former Treasury Secretary George Shultz last week described Alexander as a "person of integrity."

Alexander alerted Shultz in the early 1970s that Nixon's name came up for an audit under the agency's randomized process. "A few minutes later, he came back to me and said, 'We thought you'd like to tell him yourself,'" Shultz recalled.

"So I called Al Haig (the White House chief of staff)... An hour later, he called me back to say the president is at Camp David, and he is up the wall over this – the IRS never audits the president."

Alexander proved that many previous presidents had been audited, and the Nixon audit went forward. It turned up a number of irregularities, which were leaked to the press and led to a special prosecutor's investigation. In the end, it was determined that the president owed more than \$400,000 in back taxes and penalties.

The only time Alexander met Nixon, he told Tax Notes in 2002, was when he attended a 1973 concert at the White House. "You have a very difficult job. Do it well, and do it honestly," the president said.

"Later those words came in very

handy," Alexander added.

Donald Crichton Alexander was born May 22, 1921, in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, and graduated from Yale University. He served in the Army in Europe during World War II as a forward artillery observer and received the Silver Star and the Bronze Star.

After the war, he graduated from Harvard University law school and edited the law review. He worked at the Washington law firm of Covington and Burling until 1954, then moved to Cincinnati where he worked on tax law until 1973, when Nixon appointed him IRS commissioner.

After he left the IRS, Alexander worked for a series of New York and Washington law firms. He also served on numerous federal commissions.

Alexander remained in the public eye throughout the years, commenting on tax matters including President Clinton's removal of gifts given to the White House and arguing against a 1995 proposal to use debt-collection agencies to recover unpaid taxes. Alexander worked full time until a year before his death. ■

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### HOW THE WORLD WORKS TODAY

If a man cuts his finger off while slicing salami at work, he blames the restaurant.

If you smoke three packs a day for 40 years and die of lung cancer, your family blames the tobacco company.

If your neighbor crashes into a tree while driving home drunk, he blames the bartender.

If your grandchildren are brats without manners, you blame television.

If your friend is shot by a deranged madman, you blame the gun manufacturer.

And if a crazed person breaks into the cockpit and tries to kill the pilot at 35,000 feet, and the passengers kill him instead, the mother of the crazed deceased blames the airline.

So, if I die while I'm parked in front of my computer, I want all of you to blame Bill Gates.

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# Love and War

by Robert W. "Bob" Buntin

*Editor's Note: Robert W. Buntin, author of the biographical book "A Long Way Home," recently published his second book entitled "Love and War." A treatise and WWII memoir, the book expresses Bob's thoughts on man's attitude toward love and war. The following are the preface and first three chapters of the book. Those who would like to read the entire book may secure a copy by contacting the author at 505 College Ave., Blackstone, VA 23824, phone number 434-292-4826.*

## Preface

I would like and prefer this to be an autobiography, but I see no sense if I cannot tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. I would be too ashamed and not have the courage to be that honest. Therefore, I fear the reader will find only some sort of philosophical muddling about our country's state of affairs and life's meaning.

Prior to their holding the highest office in the land, two of our presidents were postmasters. President John F. Kennedy, a Democrat, appointed me postmaster of Blackstone, Virginia in 1963, just over a month before his assassination.

President Andrew Jackson, a Democrat, appointed Abraham Lincoln, a Republican, postmaster in 1833. What could have possessed Jackson to do such a thing? The reason is unknown but there must have been any number of qualified Democrats he could have appointed to be postmaster of New Salem, Illinois. Lincoln proved to be a good postmaster; in one instance, he was reported to have delivered

the U.S. Mail, carrying some in the lining of his hat.

World War I President, Woodrow Wilson, appointed Harry Truman postmaster of Grandview, Missouri in 1914. The generous Truman refused the pay, which was about \$59 per month, and directed that his pay go to a WW I postal clerk who had been widowed by the war. Postmaster appointments, like judges, were positions requiring confirmation by the U.S. Senate.

We now have a billion Islamic people mad as hell with us, who will do anything and everything they can to kill Americans. We have so many hating us because we chose the wrong course of action following the massacre of our own on September 11, 2001 by a group of suicidal murderers. Why wouldn't we want revenge, and be as certain as possible that it doesn't happen again?

It is natural to have that feeling, but our invasion of Iraq was exactly the wrong way to react. We are there now and must make the best of it until we can muster an orderly withdrawal; but withdraw we must. The same with Afghanistan, as we have been there nine years and counting, and guess what? Not much in our national interest! Thirty thousand more troops can't make a difference. Let's declare success and get the hell out. Our troops will love you for that, Mr. President.

It's bad enough having a billion people wishing us ill. Of more concern is having our armed forces spread too thin. God forbid that we are faced with another crisis, for we are

stretched to the limit. How did we get ourselves in such a predicament in the first place? That's not the right question, but it has to do with arrogance and our change in foreign policy. We are looking abroad for monsters to destroy, a preemptive solution, to get them before they get us. That has never before been an objective of our foreign policy. What we seek is peace and the absence of war, but then why do we choose war so often? It is because man loves war, contrary to his declaration otherwise. That is the debate undertaken here, the how and the why love and war are so intertwined.

Wars are the deaths of republics, but don't we know that? President Madison warned, "No nation can preserve its freedom in the midst of continual warfare." We are in great need of a long interim of peace, that we may save ourselves, our country. In *The Conscience of a Conservative*, Barry Goldwater writes, "Is it so hard when we think of the risks that were taken to create our country? – Risks on which our ancestors openly and proudly staked their lives, their fortunes, and sacred honor." Will we do any less today to save our country with the avoidance of war, staking our lives, our fortunes and sacred honor?

The phrase, *this too shall pass* is an old proverb which basically means that all things go to history in their own time; and something will take its place that will also pass on to history. *This too shall pass away* is universal wisdom, but also a warning to hold

*(Continued on page 19)*

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## LOVE AND WAR...

(Continued from page 18)

fast to our republic, and pass on our hard earned freedoms. This is not possible with our state of continual warfare.

Upon victory in Europe (VE Day), May 8, 1945, we boarded a hospital ship at Le Havre, France headed for the good ole USA. I wished to be in New York celebrating in Times Square but was happy to be quietly celebrating aboard ship headed that way. Then it hit me! What if, lurking out in the Atlantic was a German U-boat whose captain had not gotten the word the war was over? We could be torpedoed, and having survived all the shells and near starvation in a German prison only to now perish at sea sailing for home. The old anxiety returned as I sought reassurance from any sailor I could grab, and who appeared dumbfounded at my question about such a possibility. I asked more than one to pass my concern on to his captain, requesting that he be alert for such a reality. There is always someone who doesn't get the word!

### Chapter I

Christmas Eve 1944 at 9:15 in the morning the troopship SS *Leopoldville* departed Southampton, England for Cherbourg, France ninety-five miles away across the English Channel. Lurking there in the Channel was the German U-boat 486 commanded by First Lieutenant Gerhard Meyer. This was a new German submarine built and launched in mid-February 1944 from the shipyards of Kiel, Germany. The troopship was only

five miles from the entrance to Cherbourg harbor when disaster struck. *U-486* slicing through the waters with periscope up was stalking the approaching *Leopoldville* and upon command of Lieutenant Gerhard Meyer fired a salvo of torpedoes.

Aboard the ship were over 2000 soldiers of the 66th (Panther) Infantry Division being sent as reinforcements for the Battle of the Bulge, which began on 16th of December. In this small convoy was the SS *Cheshire* holding another 2000 members of the 66th Division. On this troopship was a friend of mine, Wayland H. "Turtle" Jones, an infantry officer. Turtle had taught me in high school and was now on his way to rescue me. Of course, he did not know I was one of many in trouble, fighting in the Bulge. He would never have the chance to rescue, such was the heavy loss of life aboard the *Leopoldville* from his division.

The division was diverted to another assignment as 876 soldiers of the 66th Infantry Division perished with the sinking of the *Leopoldville*. This disaster was immediately classified top-secret and remained classified until the end of the war, and for many years thereafter. The families of the victims never knew in most instances what happened or how their loved ones died. Over 400 bodies were never recovered from the freezing waters of the Atlantic. All surviving officers and men of the division were sworn to secrecy. The enemy must not learn the magnitude of our loss.

There are dozens of stories about survivors and those at-

tempting to survive, and the heroic efforts of officers and others trying to save their men. The British destroyer HMS *Brilliant* pulled alongside the sinking *Leopoldville* and threw a line to the doomed ship. An officer on the *Brilliant* called out, "Jump, lads, Jump! Ye may never have another chance like this!"

The two ships heaving up and down in the heavy seas made it scary and difficult to jump to the deck of the destroyer. One had to time his jump just right to make a safe landing as the gap grew and closed between the two rolling ships. One would get crushed or fall into the sea between the two ships if the timing of the jump was missed. However, most of those making a go of it landed successfully on the deck of the destroyer. These stories make one cringe and cause a yearning for the absence of war. Being pulled from the freezing waters in time is a welcome one will never forget.

### Chapter II

"Well alright you damn little fool," I kept repeating to myself, as I clawed my way up a snow-covered Vosges Mountain, New Years Day 1945, about dusk, scared and all alone. The words were of the Blackstone postmaster, my boss, when he gave up trying to talk me out of ending up in the very kind of predicament that I now found myself. (Neither he nor the "damn little fool" had an inkling I would one day succeed him in office.) However, I was in love in 1942 and thought going to war was the most welcome and oppor-

(Continued on page 20)

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## LOVE AND WAR...

(Continued from page 19)

tune way possible to prove my love. The words kept ringing in my ears as I slipped, cursed, and shifted my M-1 rifle. The chatter of a German machine gun at the foot of the mountain encouraged my anxious ascent.

Why didn't I listen? "You idiot," to myself. "You thought you knew what war was like! And you didn't have a clue. You damn little fool." Tears filled my eyes as I thought of my mother receiving the telegram of regret. I'm listening to the distant pounding of our Artillery and following that sound in hope of reaching our lines. "I wonder who she will marry? You're going to freeze to death on this mountain. How romantic! God, what am I doing here? How did I get here?"

Our infantry "Charlie" Company, part of the 62nd Armored Infantry Battalion, 14th Armored Division, had been overrun New Year's Eve; part of the Battle of the Bulge. I am now lost in the bitterly cold Vosges Mountains of northeastern France. It was a beautiful but awesome sight, to look out from the downside of one mountain and see nothing in your line of travel but one snow-covered mountain peak after another.

Upon gaining my freedom months later, the debriefing officer for the U.S. Army asked if the date of my missing in action, 01-01-45, and date of capture were the same? When I answered in the negative, he asked for the date of surrender and I gave him, 01-06-45. Upon reflection it must have been about 01-04-45 because the frigid like

conditions made it seem longer than it actually was. I simply lost track of time and believe the army's date of record that I gave them is incorrect. I had no timepiece.

What a wonderful thing, to have a war with which to exemplify my love. The two are inextricably intertwined, so I must love war. No, I hate war, the same as everybody else. So, is it the bellicose chief leading his receptive followers into the abyss of war as John Stoessinger contends in his book, *Why Nations Go To War?* He then answers the title of his book, "nations don't go to war, men do." Why do you suppose we go so often as we all hate war?

If history could give the cause for the decline of the British Empire with only one word, it would be *war*. It had endured but it had cost too much, too long; too many wars, beginning with the Boer wars.

### Chapter III

"There never was a time when, some way could not be found to prevent the drawing of the sword." – Ulysses S. Grant

"Never think that war, no matter how necessary, nor how justified, is not a crime." – Ernest Hemingway

There were more desertions and resulting executions in the Civil War than any war before or since. The Union Army suffered the most with one out of every seven deserting (about 200,000 deserters) and the Confederate Army, one out of every nine or about 104,000. The problem impacted the South the most because there were a half million fewer men under arms.

There were three sided formations for required witnessing of the executions to discourage the shameful death, and die the good death in battle. These formal executions for many, were a hard thing to take.

During World War II, while planning the invasion of Sicily with his staff, the great General George S. Patton, Jr. blurted out, "God, how I love war!" There were other times in which Patton, upon witnessing the aftermath of violence and the bloody gore of war, expressed his love for war.

It is quite a presumption to think you know something about love and war, which has not already been written. Listen to the words of Otto Rank, the great psychoanalyst: "For the time being I gave up writing – there is already too much truth in the world – an overproduction which apparently cannot be consumed." Nevertheless there is a compulsion to write on, if blissfully, as there is nothing more important in the world than to seek peace, the absence of war. "Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the sons of God."

Love is a many "splendored" – "splintered" thing! I will speak to love mostly in the abstract, but how all kinds of love are intertwined with war. Why do two people in love let war interfere and destroy their relationship? The consummation of their love becomes dependent upon the personal need to go to war. The conclusion drawn is that man loves war in order that he may have a realization of love.

War is the means whereby

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## LOVE AND WAR

(Continued from page 20)

he is able to exhibit and prove his undying love! This is the ultimate in our thinking, to risk dying for the one we love by going off to war. How else can I prove my love, but to fight for you, for country! I'm not worthy of your love if I do otherwise. No amount of pleading is sufficient to keep me from going. It is the only to prove, to justify that love – to join with others, to

go to war.

It is compelling and there is no way out, but why do I want to risk losing that which I love by going to war? Is it egotistical insanity? Maybe in part, but it is also about heroics, and belief in one's immortality. We think we're indestructible, which has to do with being so young and naïve.

I'm exempt from the draft but must go in order to prove that love, and return the hero. I shall survive the mortality of the

bullet for I am indestructible.

It's all about luck! Though I sense my number coming up, my own mortality remains unreal. The denial of death is essential in order to cope with its realization.

Andy Rooney, former (combat) war correspondent during WWII, and now of *60 Minutes* fame, proclaimed, "I do not accept the inevitability of my own death. I secretly think there may be some other way out." ■

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## THE BRITISH HOME FRONT IN A CHILD'S EYES

By John Graham, Denver, Colorado

I was 5 years old when World War II began. My father, a London metropolitan police inspector, retired when the war broke out. We moved to my mother's home country of Wales, as far from the reach of Nazi bombers as we could get.

Our new home overlooked the sea near Pwllheli. On clear days, we could see the great medieval castles of Criccieth and Harlech. To the left was Snowdon, the highest mountain in England and Wales, and we could see the smoke of the narrow track railway engine that chuffed its way to the summit. Even on cloudy days, the sea below was beautiful in all its moods.

The hillside land around the house that my parents bought was a rocky wilderness. My father immediately built an air-raid shelter 9 feet into the earth, capping it with reinforced concrete and a garden. Stone steps led down to a room wide enough for two bunks and containers.

The war meant no road

signs, no maps and a deep suspicion of strangers. Uniformed girls helped on the farms while soldiers marched up and down the local roads. Army camps were scattered around, and German planes flew overhead and bombed the naval camp during the war.

Just three miles away was a prisoner-of-war camp filled with Italians, mostly farmers conscripted into Mussolini's army. They were allowed out on work detail, and one worked on our neighbor's garden.

He arrived by truck each morning and spent the day cutting lawns and hedges as well as weeding. At breaks, he would drink tea and practice his English on me. One day, he didn't appear, and I never saw him again. I still have the bronze five-lira coin he gave me.

Our garden was dedicated entirely to fruit and vegetables, and my parents ran a small holding with chickens, ducks, geese, turkeys and pigs. The chickens were fed partially on kitchen

scraps collected from neighbors in return for eggs.

Twice a week, I carried buckets to collect scraps and leavings and became an authority on what families ate. These chores earned me pocket money, first a sixpence and then a shilling (5 to 10 cents) a week. To supplement this pocket money and to buy a five-shilling National Savings account stamp for the war effort, I did other jobs. I collected wild rose hips from the hedgerows for the Ministry of Health's rose-hip syrup distributed through the schools to keep us healthy.

We carried gas masks everywhere and practiced sheltering in our school trenches regularly. One Christmas I received a beautiful blue oilskin case for my gas mask to replace the uncomfortable cardboard box with the string that cut into my shoulder.

Years later, I wondered at the irony of giving a child a gas mask case as a gift in the season of peace.



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## SOUTHEASTERN CHAPTER MEETS AGAIN IN ORLANDO

The Southeastern States Chapter of the 14th Armored Division Association held its 2011 Reunion at the Hampton Inn and Suites, Orlando, FL, the last weekend in January. Six veterans and six spouses/other guests responded to the assembly call. Attendees were National President, Chuck Hurl and wife Betty, Joe and Mary Ann Cotten, Tom and Margaret McCoy, Bob McClarren and Carol Lynn Wilson, Fred Harshberger and his son-in-law, Jack Harvey, and Harry Kemp. Also, present were Tim O'Keefe and Jo Davies, widow of the late Liberator Bob Davies. (Three other veterans were registered but were unable to join us.)

As is now customary, the event was largely informal. Breakfast was Hampton Inn complimentary; for lunch there was a simple picnic-style buffet in the hospitality room, and daily the group decided where

to go for dinner.

In addition to the annual business meeting there were two special events. We were the appreciative guests of Tom McCoy, who hosted a brunch at his prestigious club, Arnold Palmer's Bay Hill Country Club and Lodge. The other special event was an hour with Tim O'Keefe, author of the new trade published history of the 14th Armored Division, Battle Yet Unsung, who talked about the experiences and details in the writing of the book. And, except for the business session, there were a lot of memories to talk about.

At 2 p.m., Saturday, January 29, the co-chairman, Bob McClarren, called to order the annual business meeting of the chapter. Last year's minutes were approved, the Co-chairman reported that the last bank statement showed a balance of \$503.21, heard a report by Na-

tional President Hurl on plans for the National Reunion to be held in Indianapolis, September 14-18, and observed a minute of silence for the 5 members who had been reported deceased.

The question of whether or not the Chapter, in the light of the small and rapidly dwindling membership, should be disbanded was raised. After discussion, the group decided to continue, operating as was done this year. The Reunion will return to the Hampton Inn and Suites, the service being excellent. The manager had gone to the web, pulled up information from the Division website, duplicated it, and gave it to all of her staff. We were made to feel like a welcome relative! The dates are Jan. 28-30, with the first day, a day of travel.

Robert McClarren,  
co-chairman

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### Identifies Men in Photo

**Dear Ms. Chelette:**

In reference to page 16 of the Spring 2011 issue of *the Liberator*, the photo in the lower left-hand corner of the page, I believe, has been misidentified. This photo actually is of members of the 1st Platoon 19 AIB.

The men shown are from left to right: Myrle C. Walters, rifleman and ammunition (Mississippi); Herbert Drew Hurst, gunner (Texas); and Adolph Croteau, assistant gunner (Wisconsin). The three of us were together in the war from Sospel to Jettenbach.

I look forward to receiving each issue of *The Liberator* and appreciate your efforts for the 14th Armored Division Assn.

Sincerely,  
Myrle C. Walters



# WESTERN STATES CHAPTER

## LIBERATORS,

Western States Chapter of the 14th A.D. Association met April 12th & 13th in Laughlin, NV and across the Colorado River at the Casa Serrano Restaurant for the 14th year.

A new couple attended, Howard and Dorlyne Genrich of 19C. Wednesday Howard was dressed in his ODs and cap from 1945. He said the trousers shrank so he wore khakis.

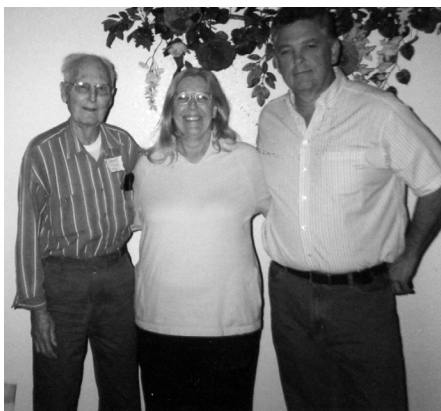
Frank Fulmer's son Kent and wife Susie came by from Phoenix to report on Frank and wife Bernita. They now live in an assisted living residence.

Richard Horton and wife Barbara attended on Tuesday but went back to Phoenix on Wednesday to prepare for returning to Goodrich, Michigan for the summer.

Joe & Mary Ann Cotten brought some of their quarry stones, polished and mounted on necklaces and rings.



Tanker picture: front L-R - Shirley Todd, Annette Clark and Mary Ann Cotten; rear - Darrell Todd 48C, Donald Clark 48Hq; Joe Cotten 47D.



Pictured are Darrell Todd, Teresa Gail McAfee, and Mike McAfee.

Beautiful.

Gus and Doris Hinrich were also in attendance to celebrate a wedding reunion. Don and Annette Clark each celebrated birthdays down from Bountiful, Utah.

Jim Lankford, our historian, also attended and mentioned another of his articles on General Devers is coming out in *The Liberator* and in the *On Point* magazine.

Mike McAfee and his sister Teresa Gail McAfee came out from Collierville, TN and Mustang, OK. They are the niece and nephew of Nathan McAfee who was KIA. Prior to going overseas he was best man at Darrell and Shirley Todd's wedding. Darrell and Nathan were in the same tank.

Our breakfast together was changed to Wednesday and all 16 attended.

- As ever, Joe Fitts



Pictured are: front Howard Genrich 19C, Dorlyne Genrich, Doris Hinrich; rear- Joe Fitts 136C, Jim Lankford 19A, Gus Hinrich 62A. Apologies to Richard Horton and wife Barbara; left out with poor camera angle.



Howard Genrich 19C showed the rest of us up attending in his 1945 uniform.

# ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ DONATIONS

- Carma G. Richens
- Marianne Lohof
- John & Mertyce Meyer
- Kimberly Kay Hunter
- Albert Marino
- Matt Sitnik
- Robert McClarren
- Ray F. Huning
- Thomas M. Sheeran
- Russell Smith
- Morris Berman
- David Berman
- Don Berman
- Vernon Hagedorn
- Arthur W. Gustus
- Joseph W. Fiske
- Jack Grosse
- Nunzio Dagostino
- Robert Kamm
- James and Susan Smith
- Norene Johnson
- Morton D. Fidler
- James Snoby
- Edwin M. Kosik
- Allan G. Skinner,  
in Loving memory of  
Harold Skinner,  
A Troop, 94th CAV
- Richard Horton
- Mark Oester
- Lee Oester
- Lee Z. Mathison,  
in Memory of Patt Dooley,  
wife of Jim Dooley, 500 AFA
- Robert McKenna
- Willard Armbruster
- Marie A. Porphiglio Vertigan
- John C. Daniels
- William Z. Breer
- John P. Meyer, Sr.
- Given in honor and memory  
Kenneth H. Clapper





# MAIL CALL

## STILL THINKING POSITIVE

DEAR VERLYN:

Margaret's poem was published in the local newspaper six months before she died on the operating table during major heart surgery here in Albuquerque.

She may be remembered by a few of us ole' timers as part of the musical entertainment provided by Harry Kemp on the piano, and Dudley Partrick and Marge belting out the sweet old soldiers song 'Lilli Marleen,' so popular during WWII in Europe.

Back in 1995 there was a popular daily radio personality, Paul Harvey, on KOB AM Albuquerque, and KVSE Santa Fe, who told a few of Marge's fictional stories; referring to her as a nurse friend in the local hospital.

Following are Marge's words:

### "Diversity of Age"

I am young,  
I enjoy the seasons of the year.  
The autumn with falling leaves.  
and winter to follow.  
I've heard of this association to life  
Now! I know the autumn people  
will soon be entering winter.  
They often look sad, but smile.

When I was young  
I really didn't much notice the leaves  
falling but now, I realize the meaning  
of life, the autumn years.  
I see the body change  
I realize now the seasons of life  
for soon - there will be no more leaves  
to fall.

– Margaret (King) Straba

I am 91 and like most of us seniors  
in contemplating death, hope to more  
or less drop dead. Quickly, unknow-  
ingly, painlessly.

And I might say too, that I feel  
content. I've done my thing, fished  
all over the U.S.A., and parts of Can-  
ada, old Mexico and the streams and

lakes of Slovakia, where my ancestors  
were farmers, and I would guess, also  
fished.

I've raised my five kids and with  
the help of Marge's dedication to the  
nursing profession and hard work we  
were able to help each of them get a  
house and provide us with grandkids  
to brighten our later years of aging.

I'm still thinking positive - and  
under the 'Hospice' people who pro-  
vide supportive care for terminally ill  
patients!

Your's truly,  
Bob Straba

## SAW SOMETHING SPECIAL

DEAR VERLYN,

I just talked to Harry Kemp down  
in Georgia. I asked him about a call he  
got from Washington. He says the De-  
partment of the Army contacted him  
and said according to the records, he  
was the lowest ranked soldier to ever  
get a battlefield commission, Pfc to  
2nd Lt. He was contacted by a West  
Point cadet who was given the assign-  
ment to contact Harry and interview  
him. Harry in all his modesty told the  
cadet that he was no different than  
20,000 other GIs who went through  
the 14th Armored Division. We were  
just doing the job we got assigned,  
and, fought the best we knew how. It's  
obvious that Harry's commanding of-  
ficer saw something special in Harry.

I thought this was a little interest-  
ing tidbit. We now know what that  
Pentagon is used for and what kind of  
special assignments they give at West  
Point.

Best regards,  
Elton C. Ross

## HARRY KEMP IS ONE OF A KIND

VERLYN:

Recently I have been contacted by

Ft. Belvoir informing me that their re-  
cords indicate that I am the only WW2  
US Army soldier promoted from PFC  
to Second Lieutenant in the European  
Theater of Operations and the Pacific  
Theater of Operations. They also said  
that I will receive a letter in the near  
future from President Barack Obama  
congratulating me and thanking me  
for my service to my country in WW2

Regards and best wishes,  
Harry Kemp

## APPRECIATES WORK OF "YOUNGSTERS"

DEAR ANN (LAPO),

This 91-year-old 68th AIB veteran  
would like to express my thanks to  
you and the rest of you youngsters for  
keeping the 14th Armored Division  
Association sailing along.

– Arthur W. Gustus

## APPRECIATES GETTING LIBERATOR

DEAR MS. LAPO:

I am so appreciative of receiving  
*The Liberator*, and reading the news  
and articles in each publication. I want  
to continue receiving it and enclose a  
donation to help with the expense.  
My late husband, Hugh Richens, was  
a member of the 14th Armored and it  
is good to be able to know what the  
organization is doing. My best to all.

Sincerely,  
Carma G. Richens

## READS LIBERATOR IN GERMANY

Dear Ms. Lapo,

Every issue of *The Liberator*, I read  
until the end. Enclosed is a check for  
postage donation. Thank you for your  
work.

Sincerely,  
Marianne Lohof



## MAIL CALL... Continued

### APPRECIATES THE LIBERATOR

DEAR MR. HOFER,

Thank you so much for helping us get *The Liberator*. Our whole family appreciates your efforts.

Enclosing a check to pay for year's subscription. Please let me know if you need more.

You are doing a super job in publishing this most informative newsletter. I know everyone looks forward to getting it.

Sincerely,

Virginia Auer (Mike's widow)

### ON MEND FROM SERIOUS

#### ACCIDENT

Dear Verlyn,

Sorry I was unable to make last year's reunion and it looks like I will be unable to attend this one as well. Fortunately you are still publishing the *Liberator* and it's getting even better as the years go by with many interesting stories. Attached is my check to help keep it coming.

The reason I'm having a physical problem making these reunions is due to an accident I had on one of my motorcycles back on April 21st, 2010. I have been riding motorbikes over the years since I was 11 years old and although I have had a few spills, none were serious until this one. My left hip was badly broken plus the right ankle.

The bones were repaired with metal plates and screws but the worst problem was an infection called MRSA (Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*) that occurred, which is resistant to almost all antibiotics. It took 6 months of intravenous daily injections to clear it up. By the way, almost all hospitals are plagued with a variety of infections now, several of which are immuned to drugs. Stay out of hospitals if at all possible.

My strength is slowly coming back but will never be as good as it was before the accident.

While in Florida this winter, a local WWII museum in Stuart asked me if I would show one of my DVDs outdoors at night on a large white screen and answer questions over a PA system. They chose the Marseille to Munich one and put some advance publicity in a couple of local papers. A fairly large crowd showed up and I was flattered to get a nice hand after the show.

Next year, the good Lord willing, I may show a couple of other of my WWII DVDs.

Best regards

Bill Breer

### THE LIBERATED REMEMBERED

DEAR VERLYN,

Received a copy of the Patton Saber yesterday and was surprised to find an article concerning the 14th Armored's liberation of POW Camp Stalag VII-A. Not sure whether or not you are familiar with this article but thought perhaps it would be of interest.

Yours truly,

Jack Hennen

Article follows:

#### Reflections

#### **Readers Share Recollections on General Patton**

Robert L. Monson of South Jordan, Utah, shared his recollections of being freed from a POW camp in Germany. Here is an excerpt of his letter along with selections from a history of the POW Camp Stalag VII-A in Moosburg, Germany written by Martin Braun of Moosburg that Mr. Monson provided.

*I am an 85-year-old World War II veteran, who flew 15 bombing missions over Nazi Germany in a B-24 bomber. General George S. Patton and his 3rd Army rescued and freed me and 200,000*

*other men and women interned as Prisoner's of War in Moosburg, Germany in May of 1945. General Patton is my greatest American hero!... He deserves more recognition than he got from this country that he loved so much.*

Sincerely and Thank You,

Richard L. Monson

Formerly of the 15AF in Italy

### **Excerpts from a History of the Liberation of POW Camp Stalag VII-A in Moosburg Germany**

By Martin Braun.

The 47th had split into two columns, one led by Major Kircher, our S-3, and the other by Colonel Lann, our commander, and Gen. Karlstad went into the city with the 47th. Gen. Karlstad, the Combat Command Commander, picked up a German officer as guide, and with Lt. Joseph Luby took off for the prison camp.

The jeep was mounted with a .30-caliber machine gun; as it swung up, there were several score of armed German guards outside. Luby rolled into their midst, his jeep stopped, and with his hand on his gun called: "Achtung!" The group surrendered.

General Smith, the Division Commander, arrived at the camp shortly thereafter. An American flag was raised at the church steeple... The defenses crumbled. The 600-man 47th Tank Battalion took 2,000 prisoners; the 600-man 94th Reconnaissance Squadron took 2,000 more. Division total for the day was set at 12,000.

Scenes of the wildest rejoicing accompanied the tanks as they crashed through the double 10-foot wire fences of the prison camps. There were men and women from every nation in the camp. All combined to give the 14th Armored Division the most incredible welcome it ever received. The tanks were slowed to five miles an hour as they went through the camps - the press of men in front of them was so great. Men, some of

*(Continued on page 26)*



## MORE MAIL CALL

them prisoners five years, some American Air Corps men prisoners three years, cried and shouted and patted the tanks.

"You damned bloody Yanks, I love you!" shouted a six-foot-four Australian. A weary bearded American paratrooper climbed on a tank and kissed the tank commander. Tears streamed from his cheeks... Italians and Serbs, tired and drawn, jammed around the vehicles eagerly thrusting out their hands to touch their liberators, weeping. An Army Air Corps Lieutenant kissed a tank. "God Damn, do I love the ground forces," he said.

There were unexpected reunions; TEC/5 Floyd Mahoney of C-Company freed his own son, a Lieutenant in the Air Corps.

*Editor's Note: It should be noted that the 14th Armored Division was part of the 7th US Army through most of the European Campaign.*

### **VETERAN'S SON JOINS ASSOCIATION**

*(Editor's Note: The following is just some of the exchange of emails between Russell Kaldenberg and our historian, Jim Lankford. This is just one example of the great work Mr. Lankford does for our organization. After a little confusion, Russ became a member of the 14th AD Association. Welcome aboard, Russ.)*

#### **DEAR MR. LANKFORD,**

Greetings! My father was a member of the 14th Armored Division. He was Private Phillip Edwin Kaldenberg. He was born July 2, 1916 and passed away October 2006 in Bakersville, California at the age of 90.

I was trying to locate a friend of his by the name of Vernon D. Reeves but was never successful. My father never used the internet, but wrote letters trying to track down Mr. Reeves, who was also in the 14th.

I am interested in keeping in touch with your organization as my father had a Kodak Brownie camera

and took several dozen photographs which I am beginning to discover and would like to archive in the proper place eventually.

Any contact would be appreciated.

– Russell L. Kaldenberg

x x x x

Dear Russ:

Thank you for your email. The best place to start is with your father's unit. Once we've identified his unit, we can, with luck, pick up some sort of trail. Was he armor, infantry, artillery, cavalry, etc?

The Association donates its materials to our collection at the US Army Military History Institute. I collect hard copy or image files of photos and documents, and when I have enough, I send them in. Image files have to be scanned at 300dpi or higher to be useful. Lower resolutions simply do not have the required detail to make them worthwhile to archive.

Best regards,

Jim Lankford

National Historian

14th Armored Division Association - "LIBERATORS"

x x x x

Thanks for your response Jim. I will get the appropriate information. I believe he was armor. I have all of the information but will need to verify it for you.

Russ

x x x x

Dear Russ:

I spent some time going through the division combat roster this morning. It is organized by battalions and companies. After not finding your father's name in the tank battalion rosters, I checked some of the others and located him in the roster for the Service Company, 68th Armored Infantry Battalion. Vernon D. Reeves served in the same company as your father. Both men were Privates First Class (Pfc.). Reeves home town was Westmoreland, KS. A check of the Association membership roster showed

that Reeves was not a member. As a result, I have no contact information for him.

I am not sure if you know the duties of a service company. They made sure the necessary supplies reached the troops in the front lines. To do this they often had to go forward under fire. I tell you this so you will know your father knew what it was like first hand to be under enemy fire. The job became more dangerous in direct proportion to the level of fighting. For example, your father would have come under very heavy fire when re-supplying the infantry of the 68th AIB in Rittershoffen during the Battle of Hatten-Rittershoffen.

Hope this helps, and sorry I could not give you a firm lead regarding the whereabouts of Reeves.

Best Regards,

Jim

x x x x

Thank you very much, Jim. My dad told me a lot of stories about supplying the front lines; driving fuel trucks and being under heavy fire; repairing vehicles; and going on "unofficial" beer runs to boost morale. He also talked about his time there after VE Day and his working with captured German soldiers and civilians as my dad spoke German. Lots of stories that I am writing down for my grandchildren. I will eventually get the photos scanned at 300 dpi and get them to the archives.

I would like to join the Liberators in honor of my dad. What is the process?

Russ

### **DR. QUINN DIES**

It is with great sadness that I report to you the death of Dr. Robert Quinn on March 4, 2011, in Sun City West, AZ. He was proud of his service to our country and friendships with his army buddies. It made him very happy that *The Liberator* published

*Continued on page 27)*



**NOTICE:**  
**LIBERATOR ISSUE DATES!**  
**MARCH - JULY - NOVEMBER**  
 Information **MUST** be submitted  
**SIX WEEKS** before issue!  
 ALL INFORMATION SHOULD BE TYPED.  
 Send all information to:  
**VERLYN HOFER**

**NEXT DEADLINE IS**  
**September 30, 2011**  
 PLEASE CHECK YOUR ADDRESS  
 LABEL FOR EXPIRATION DATE  
 All changes of address should be  
 sent to Ann Chelette, Nat'l Sec.

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**SOUTH EASTERN STATES CHAPTER**

BOB McCLARREN and  
 PHIL SNOBERGER, Co-Chairs    HAMPTON INN & SUITES

**WESTERN STATES CHAPTER**

DANIEL (JOE) FITTS and ROBERT K. LONG, Organizers

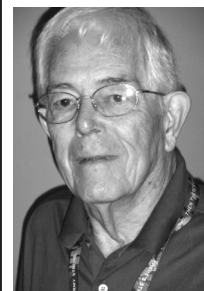
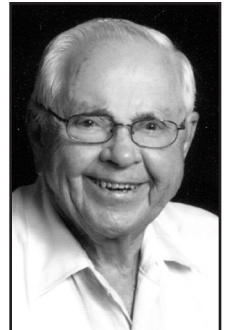
**MID WEST STATES CHAPTER**

At this time, no more meetings of the Mid West States Chapter  
 are being planned. A report and comments regarding the  
 chapter will appear in the next issue of *The Liberator*.

HAROLD KIEHNE,

**COMING NATIONAL  
 REUNIONS**

Chuck Hurl  
 2011  
 Indianapolis,  
 IN  
 Sept. 14-18



Elton Ross  
 2012  
 Green Bay, WI  
 Dates  
 Pending

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