

**2006
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Richard "Dick" Ball (2006)
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103d INF DIV WW II**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

Again, I wish to thank you for selecting me to be your President for the year 2006. An honor indeed that has been a joyfully hard working experience. And we have accomplished much. I also wish to thank the staff you gave me.

First, in these few moments of reflection, let me say that 2006 has been a banner year. Our membership has remained stable: 2052 in 2005; 2068 in 2006. Secondly, our financial situation has remained stable, also. Good news all by itself. Conservative management of our resources has enabled us to carry all of our programs comfortably.

In the beginning of the year, Jim White (our Vice President), Al Eucare (our Secretary/Treasurer), and I agreed that the leadership could do more for the membership. In sincere discussions the ideas for a ROLL CALL unit and a BIOGRAPHICAL/ PHOTOGRAPHICAL (BIO/PHOTO) service unit were conceived.

The ROLL CALL program, chaired by Al Eucare, was advanced for the purpose of locating all known 103d veterans and encouraging them to come back into our "friendly lines." Al discusses the progress on this program on page 2.

The BIO/PHOTO program was launched by your President with the view of, first, as an interesting way to utilize the opportunities made available when we established our museum home in Gainesville, Texas. An interesting endeavor has turned into a vital program of far reaching portent. I have discussed this exceedingly popular program elsewhere in this letter. Please read on.

And, of course, the 2006 Reunion in Dallas. Folks, if you missed this event you are still missing the memory. Many have called me afterwards and opined that the Reunion, by itself, was a banner experience. See the pictures in our letter here.

Finally, the REALLY BIGGIE this banner year was the conclusion of the Monument Fund's efforts in establishing and dedicating the TEXAS WORLD WAR II HISTORICAL MONUMENT. The deed is done; the monument is in place. Our centerfold shows you the story. The monument story is a story of monumental success.

GOD BLESS YOU ALL!

In Camaraderie,

Harold Branton, President
103d INF DIV ASSN of WW II

O R C (OPERATION ROLL CALL)

December Status Report

Recall that ROLL Call consists of three phases:

PHASE I: To Search, find, and contact registered members on the MASTER LIVING ROSTER who have incomplete contact data.

PHASE II: To search and find 6,000 men on the LOST MEMBER ROSTER.

PHASE III: To search public records to find former unit members.

In the beginning of PHASE I, I divided each state into ZIP code search zones. During the period a core of 128 loyal and energetic state volunteer COORDINATORS were chosen. One lead COORDINATOR per state. Each LEAD COORDINATOR was given the task of leading ZONE ENUMERATORS as necessary to cover the state.

Into the action, the names of the inactive registered members were obtained from the MASTER LIVING ROSTER. Names were assigned to the ZONE ENUMERATORS. The task of the ENUMERATOR was to contact the Cactus registered member and obtain data: Full name, address, zip code, telephone number, email address, and unit in which he served (company/battery and parent Regiment, or Support Battalion). And, where appropriate, the name and birthday of the spouse and any legacy progeny (children, etc.). Hence, by interaction, the member would be encouraged to return to active participation and comradeship in the Cactus Association.

At the end of the year, the ZONE ENUMERATOR is to report the result of his/her search to the ROLL CALL DATA CENTER (RCDC) manager. That office is served by Associate Julie PARTYNSKI, 5214 S. Merrimac, Chicago, IL 60638; email julie428@hotmail.com

To assist in search and contact, each COORDINATOR and ENUMERATOR was supplied with a state roster and applicable zone rosters. The dominant theme throughout is COMMUNICATION! The initial services of PHASE I end 31 December 2006.

PHASE II commences 1 January 2007. This phase is performed by Company/Battery volunteers to seek members previously active with the Association but over time were lost and posted to our LOST MEMBER FILE. As many as two thirds of our LOST may be deceased; nevertheless it is the duty and responsibility of the Association to HONOR all Cactus men. The RCDC manager is Associate Dennis Ryan, email djryan@nbcglobal.net; street address 5138 Pepin Pl; Madison, WI 53705.

PHASE III, Public Records Search. This phase is more ambitious than the earlier phases. Real dedication will be necessary. Multiple teams at the Company/Battery unit level will have to be formed. Each unit liaison will contact the National Personnel Records Center for their respective unit Morning Reports and Rosters for the 35 months of Division activation. Member legacy progeny teams can then step up to the plate to perform the prescribed data entry.

Reading through these notations, it becomes obvious that ROLL CALL is BIG, and it has the taste of work. My heartiest thanks go to those who "volunteered" for these services. As all have come to realize, the dominant theme prevailing throughout the program is COMMUNICATION and COMRADESHIP. GOD BLESS AMERICA!

AL EUCARE

HONOR ROLL

Here listed are the death "notifications" received since publication of NFTCP No. 13, Sept. 2006.

BAILEY, Donald G.	409 Co D	KOLLER, Carl J.	409 Co B
BARRETT, Raymond "Red"	382 FA Bn, Bty B	LUKSICH, Frank E.	411 Co D
BOKROS, Charles S.	410 Co L	MESSE, Aime G. "Bud"	411 Co B
BUBRENZER, Gus C.	409 AT Co	OHS, Eugene B.	409 Co C
CIARMAETARIO, Sam	411 Co E	PETERS, Otto F.	409 Co B
ELLER, Edmund R.	411 Co E	REES, Keith H.	409 Co D
GULICK, Edward J.	409 Co D, 103d QM	REYNOLDS, Jack C.	103d Sig Co
HORST, Russel J.	410 Co C	ROBINSON, Robert	409 Co E
HOWELL, Harold J.	411 AT Co	SODMAN, Albert E.	409 Co D
JOHNSON, Martin O.	409 Co G	STEED, Leonard L. MD	328 Med Bn
KEIL, Ben	409 Co D		

"Today I attended the funeral of an old soldier of World War II. It was in a little church in Texas. His breast was covered with medals and a brilliantly polished Combat Infantry Badge. He was surrounded by old but proud, uniformed men of his World War II unit with whom he had served during the greatest war. I looked down on that old fellow, whose once strong and tireless heart beat inside that powerful chest, and knew that I was saying so long to a true hero.

This old soldier did as many others. He stormed into France in the cold winter of 1944, fighting his way into Germany, the enemy nation, and carrying freedom through that wayward state on into Austria and to the gates of Italy in 1945. He had known the loneliness, the cold, the horrors of war and now had come home to rest.

There were tears from the many as the old warrior was carried down the aisle and out onto the lawn. There were sobs as the mourners accompanied the body to the resting place. A memorial volley was fired; a flag of our country was tendered to the family. My mind kept going back to that brave and wonderful lad who, in his youth, had so willingly offered himself up to his country and to his fellow men, for the cause of freedom and liberty.

In my heart I grieved for the loss of a buddy, yet I was comforted in knowing that I had this day witnessed the passing of another American hero."

A Cactusman

REPORT DEATHS TO:

Harley Richardson, President
2129 Wilburn Place
Bethany, OK 73008

Please furnish a copy of the obituary, if at all possible, for our records. Every member in the Association has a file folder in the Archives for the veteran's message to the future and to posterity. A copy of his Army DISCHARGE and his STATEMENT OF SERVICE, Form 212, will be very helpful, as well. We thank you very much for just the copy of those reports. Please accept our gratitude.

FOR YOUR CACTUSMAN'S OBITUARY

In the event of the death of a Cactusman, may we suggest that you include the following in the obituary.

"In lieu of flowers, please make donations to: 103D INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION OF WORLD WAR II, in care of AI EUCARE, 6708 Lansdale Street, DISTRICT HEIGHTS, MD 20747. Your veteran loved one was a member of, and held affection for, that division that fought so long and so well in Europe to preserve the freedom and liberties of the world. He would approve of these donations."

BIO/PHOTO PROGRAM YEAR END REPORT

Talk about moving along! We opened upon this BIO/PHOTO activity in March 2006. A brief description of its beginnings was provided in our NFTCP No. 12. A form was developed and included in the Newsletter for participants to use. The Cactus veteran or the Associate may leave a personal family record on the front side; the back side has space for at least one story or description of an event. Extra material may need extra sheet(s).

What message may you leave for the future? Consider: stories of your youth: old home address, description of the environment, your school, your church, your college; when you entered the service and the wartime society; basic training, advanced and maneuvers; where: Claiborne or Camp Howze; experiences during your fighting time.

What kind of war stories can you tell? Plenty. Take for instance—

Rifleman: Describe your weapon, weight, how you carried it, your confidence in the weapon. Describe the ammunition and its capabilities. How did you keep it clean. Did you ever have it malfunction in battle?

Mortarman: Describe the weapon, detail how it is prepared for firing. Describe how it is fired. Does it have a trigger? No? Then how does one get the thing to do its thing? Tell a story.

Machinegunner: Describe it. Light or heavy type. How many men are in the machine gun squad? How was it deployed? You can tell what you remember. What kind of foxhole is best to deploy a machinegun? Tell it.

Quartermaster: Tell me, how did you get all that fresh water? More important, how did you transport it to the front line guys? And all the fine food called K-

Rations (real gourmet stuff) that you brought up to the guys in the foxholes. And the C-Rations served up when troops were in reserve. These are great soldier stories, but skip the cussing about the chow!

Engineers: Tell today to the tomorrows how you purified water on the yesterdays. Think you can do that? Try it. Then describe the manner in which you distributed the water all over the division area. By the way, the water was always good. Thank you. Fact is, I wonder how you did it!

Artillery guys: You fellows can fill a book on your big guns. How they operated, how you got ammo up to the gun sites, how you lay a piece, and description of the "rope" you pull to shoot that thing. How to prepare a fire plan? There is no end to the stories that can be told about artillery.

Engineers: Roads, bridges, culverts, barbed wire, mines. Sometimes under enemy fire. Bulldozing, mine sweeping, explosives. What a bag of choices to tell stories about. Don't forget about troop showers! Why?

The photo side of the program is important, too. So important that we set up a BIO/PHOTO booth at the Reunion site in Dallas in November. Scores of photos were taken by Jerry and Bea PASSMORE, our photo team.

Finally, let me restate that we have an individual file folder in the archives for every Cactus man. And one for each Associate, as well, if his form comes in. Remember, the future is waiting for your commentaries and your photos, and already we are looking into the prospects of expanding our museum space. The museum space is another story altogether—but related. Harley Richardson will address that subject more thoroughly in 2007. This message to the future is so important that I am closing herewith a new bio/photo form for you to fill out, then send it to me. Your historian, Harold Branton 2635 Roman Forest Blvd. New Caney, TX 77357.(Insert)

103D ANNUAL REUNION 8-12 NOV. 2006 DALLAS, TEXAS
AND
MONUMENT DEDICATION 11 NOV. 2006 GAINESVILLE, TEXAS

The 103d Infantry Division of WWII was activated in 1942 in Camp Claiborne, La., and trained there and in Camp Howze near Gainesville, Texas, before shipping out to the war in Europe. Following the war, the returning veterans, in 1964, established a reunion group called the 103d Infantry Division Association of WW II. The association members have met each year in reunion up through 2006. During those years, the Association constructed and installed three modest memorial monuments in France. Those memorials stand today as a reminder to all who pass of the contributions the division made to the global battles fought in World War II for world freedom and liberty for all peoples.

In 1998, a small group of members of the Association conceived the idea of placing a true historical marker on United States soil, a notable memorial monument. The location selected was on the Texas Welcome Center properties on U. S. Interstate Highway 35 near the site of old Camp Howze, Gainesville, Texas, where the division trained during 1943 and 1944 before departing for overseas duty.

The group decided that the best way to accomplish the challenging task of constructing and installing such a memorial was to organize into a special corporation. This was done; the corporation was chartered in Texas and was named THE TEXAS WW II HISTORICAL MONUMENT FUND. Mel Wright of Houston, Texas, was elected President and work was begun.

Over the period 2000 to 2006, the Association and the FUND struggled to raise the money to construct and install the awe inspiring bronze soldier figure and a set of panels bearing the names of the members of the division who fell in battle. At last, all resources were concentrated and brought into action; adequate funds were accrued from Association membership donations; all tasks were completed. Sculptured by Mr. Edd Hayes of Spring, Texas, the monument was named "A CALL TO DUTY."

The annual reunion of the Association and the dedication of the monument were programmed to occur in unison, culminating on Veterans Day, 11 November 2006. This created a truly BANNER YEAR AND EVENTS to be enjoyed by all Association members and friends. The Reunion Committee recorded over 400 attendees to the Reunion banquet. Similarly, visitors attending the Monument Dedication were estimated at well over 1200. A BANNER YEAR INDEED!

The foregoing activities are presented pictorially in the following pages. To best review the actions, please follow the photo numbers chronologically.

Review and Reliving the 2006 Reunion at Dallas, Texas

Picture 1



Elsie and daughter Gail at Registration

Picture 2



Bio-Photo Interviews

Picture 3



Jerry and Bea Passmore,
Photographers

Picture 4



Gustav and Barbara Enyedy at Bio Photo

Picture 5



George and Joyce Mason
Hospitality Room *CABON*

Picture 6



Louise Bush and Friends
Hospitality Room

Picture 7



Ranch Hands Band
at Cactus Welcome Party

Picture 8



First Place Prize Winner
Cowboy Lamp at Welcome Party

Picture 9



Dancing Group with Classic Taps
Learning "Cotton Eye Joe"

Building Memories

Picture 10



Posting of Colors
at Business Meeting
Picture 13

Picture 11



Jim White (R) receives an award
from Harold Branton
Picture 14

Picture 12



Al Eucare (L) receives an award
from Harold Branton
Picture 15



50-50 Winner and Helpers,
Julie Partinski (L) and Katy Freeman
Picture 16



50-50 MC, Bobbie Murray,
and Two 50-50 Winners!
Picture 17



Celebration Orchestra at Banquet
Friday Night
Picture 18



Julie Partinski honors another
50-50 Winner!



Cactus Folks Dancing,
Remembering the '40s

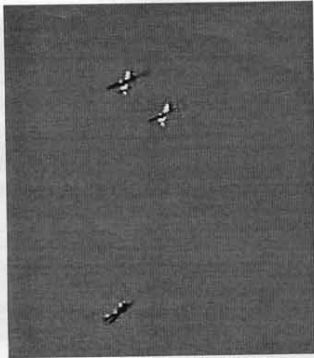


Michael and sister Sarah Freeman
Figure Dancing

Monumental Team and a Great Historical Monument

Honoring the 103d Infantry Division of World War II

Picture 1



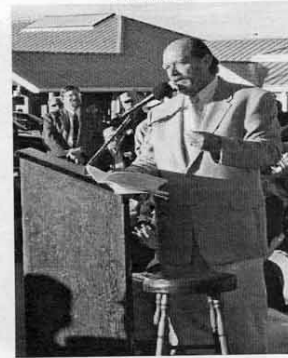
One Man Missing Formation,
Flyover at Monument Dedication

Picture 2



Select Brass Quartet from Ft Sill OK

Picture 3



Master of Ceremonies Tom Carson,
At Monument Dedication

Picture 4



Opening Invocation
at Monument Dedication

Picture 5



Standing Audience at Dedication
Program, Busses in rear

Picture 6



Cadet Corps Color Guard
from Texas A&M University

Picture 7



Ft Sill Band playing National Anthem

Picture 8



Lejeune "Rabbit" Wilson presents
Soldier maquette to Mel Wright

Picture 9



Mel Wright presents maquette to
Mayor Glen Loch, Gainesville, TX

Monument Dedication

Picture 10



Monument Fund Board

Picture 11



Guest Speakers
Monument Dedication Ceremony

Picture 12



TX State Land Commissioner
Honorable Jerry Patterson

Picture 13



TX State Veterans Commissioner
Charlie Buerschinger

Picture 16



Unveiling by Edd Hayes and
Marsha Powers

Picture 17



A CALL TO DUTY
Sculptor Edd Hayes

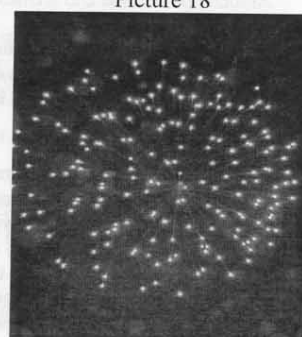
Picture 18



Rifle Firing Salute by members of the
VFW Post 1922



Larry Fowler plays "Taps"
on bagpipe



Fireworks at Lenard Park
Gainesville, Texas

MEMBERSHIP AND DUES DATA: THE COMPLETE STORY

These two, the membership and dues paying experience, provide the life blood of every organization. Our group is no different. Today, our membership stands at 2068, versus 2048 in 2005. This data includes both the REGULAR CACTUS veterans and the registered dues-paying descendants, our ASSOCIATES. Our MASTER LIVING ROSTER, a primary document, is continuously posted to reflect current data on our members: addresses, telephone numbers, email addresses, names of spouses, etc.

Similarly, a DESCENDANTS ROSTER is maintained, carrying the names and data pertaining to the known children of our veterans. This is a difficult roster to keep up to date due to the many changes of address and lapses in communication.

We speak often about DUES, not because we like to but because we have to.

EXPLANATION: First of all, it's an absolute necessity to receive the resource. Secondly, being people, each of us forgets, postpones, or delays for really no purpose at all. Reminders are, therefore, helpful. For example, of the 2030 registered members, only 893 paid dues during 2006, versus 941 in 2005. The shortfall each year continues to maintain a situation whereby the entire financial burden of the Association is carried by less than fifty percent of the membership. And so, we continue to pray that, over time, our lagging members will come to realize the fairness of our dues system.

ROSTERS MAINTAINED TO SERVICE OUR MEMBERSHIP:

MASTER LIVING ROSTER HONOR ROLL MASTER DECEASED ROSTER
DESCENDANTS ROSTER ASSOCIATES ROSTER LOST MEMBERS ROSTER

CACTUS MUSEUM STUDIES

The Morton Museum of Cooke County, Texas, located at 210 S. Dixon Street, Gainesville, is a small but viable independent institution, serving the cultural, social, education, and public entities throughout the county. It is also the museum that our Association chose for the depository and display of Association records and artifacts.

In recent visits to the museum, Association Historian and Archivist met with the Museum Director, Ms. Shana Powell to discuss space available for all purposes. The two agreed that the abundance of deposits desired by the Association to be entered far exceeded the space available in and by the Museum.

This issue was presented in detail by Harold to the assembled Board of Directors during the recent Reunion in Dallas. Upon Harold's recommendation, the Board appointed a special committee to look into the matter in depth with a view of determining options available for securing the space needed by the Association. The study committee, named "MUSEUM EXPANSION RESEARCH COMMITTEE," was directed to report to the Board with findings by 15 March 2007. Harley Richardson was named chairman of the committee. Named members would be Jim White and Luke Martin. The consistency of the committee was left open for additional members who were interested and were familiar with museum matters.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. **eMail ADDRESSES:** The Association has sought over time to establish a real communication base within the membership to facilitate networking. The Secretary/Treasurer, Al Eucare, is charged with communication duties and has requested that every member who has computer access provide the Association with his eMail address. The easiest way to assist in this endeavor is to email Al and say, "Hello, here is my email address!" When you do, we will instantly have your eMail address—it is most helpful to actually type your eMail address clearly in your message to Al as some eMail programs do not display the sender's address—just the name of the sender. Please help. Imagine getting your next NEWS FROM THE CACTUS PATCH newsletter via eMail. Neat! And it saves money for the Association. The newest version of the Master Living Roster has a column for eMail addresses, so Al or his assistant will be adding your eMail address to that document. Al's eMail address is asr26@aol.com
2. **CAPS AND LAPEL PINS:** We apologize for running out of caps and lapel pins at the Reunion in November. Our new order is now in and now you can obtain one or more of these beautiful commemorative items by mail. See page 12 for instructions.
3. **REUNION AND MONUMENT DEDICATION PHOTO PACKET -- 36 PHOTOS @ \$44:** To obtain your packet, contact Jerry and Bea Passmore at 143 Walton Road, Crossville, Tenn. 38571. 931-456-0577.
4. **OFFICERS ELECTED FOR 2007**

President	Jim White	Editor.....	Tom Swope
Vice President.....	Chan Rogers	Board Members: Unit Reps--	
Asst Vice President ...	Harley Richardson	John Poole	409 th Inf
Exec Secretary	Baxter Fite III	Arnold Marzullo ...	410 th Inf
Sec/Treasurer	Al Eucare	Michael Toohig	411 th Inf
Asst Sec/Treasurer ...	Alex Eucare, Jr.	Richard Ball	Support Trps
Historian	Lucas Martin	Dennis Ryan	Associates
Chaplain	Walter Modrzewski		

CACTUS MAIL

FROM: Dick Ball, 382 FA, Bty B. Dick reports the trauma that befell the Board of Directors, 2006, opining the passing of two members, Jerry Brenner (411 Co G) and Raymond "Red" Barrett (382 FA, Bty B) and failing health of two others (Harold Silber and Associate Andy Beck). The President was thereby left rather short handed at Reunion time. We grieve the passing of our old friends and happy to report that the illness of the two suffering has somewhat abated.

BENEDICTION *** 11 NOVEMBER 2006 *** GAINESVILLE, TEXAS

Reunion and Dedication Program concluded with these words from Judge Tom Stagg, 411 Co G

"Good Afternoon, Lord: We are back again. Some of your older adherents and their families are here this afternoon on this slender slice of Texas turf where, some sixty odd years ago, we were gathered together to learn more of the art of war.

This beautiful monument to those friends we lost in that war serves to remind us that life's termination can come in many ways—some violent, some peaceful, some painful, some sublime.

Lord, teach us not to hold on to life too tightly. Teach us to take it as a gift. To enjoy it Cherish it while we have it, but to let go gracefully and thankfully when the time comes. The gift is great, but the Giver is greater still. You are the Giver and in You is the life that never ends.

And Lord, if You have time, please see to it that we all return home safely so that we may continue in our service to Thee."

Sale of HATS and PINS 9 (while availability lasts)



103d INF Hat \$15.00
(40 available)

Soldier pin \$ 5.00
(40 available)

Cactus pin, each \$ 3.00, or 2 for \$5.00
(40 available)

To order yours, one or more, write a note and send check to: Harold Branton, 2635 Roman Forest Blvd., New Caney, TX 77357; or call Harold at (281)399-1118.

Special Requests:

- **For the archives.** Please send to Harold the following items:
 - . A copy of your discharge from the ARMY
 - . A copy of your DD form 212
 - . A photo of yourself in WW II uniform; and a nice photo of recent date

Note: The above items are for your file folder in the archive. Thank you.

103d INF DIV ASSN of WWII
6708 LANSAN BLVD.
District Heights, MD 20747

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1000

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