

2007

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103d INF DIV WW II**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

Another reunion has come and gone. The pace was slower, there were more canes, walkers, and wheel chairs. Those of us that were there realize how fortunate we are as there are less than 1 in 5 World War II veterans still living. Associate Baxter Fite III read the names of 62 of our recently deceased comrades at the business meeting.

Though we might not be as spry as we once were, the consensus was that as long as two Cactusmen can get together, there will be a reunion. It may not be the same, but the camaraderie will always be there.

The decision was made to continue using a reunion planner. Cincinnati is to be the site for 2008. If possible, the dates will be late July or early August. This is to hel some of the Associates attend with their children. If this cannot be arranged, a date in eary September is the next choice. The planner listed a number of tours that will be of interest. He has also been informed of some of the faciilities that we would like to have at the hotel in 2008.

Hopefully, a breakfast can be arranged similar to the one in St. Louis. It was nice having a modified continental breakfast where we could all be together in the Division hospitality room.

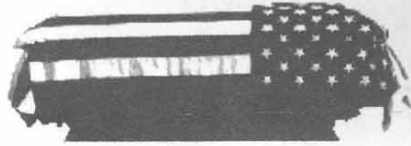
Of interest to many was the several tables of books, photos, CD,s, memorabilia, etc set-up by Associates Zack Sigler and Baxter Fite III. Zack Sigler, name sake of his uncle that was KIA of Co D 409th. Baxter' s dad was with the 328 Medics Co. C. I want to thank them for bringing their collections to St. Louis.

Three days after returning from St. Louis I had an unwelcome guest. Hurricane Humberto came in unannounced. When I went to bed on that Wednesday night we only expected a tropical storm. It has been reported that we had some gusts exceeding 100 mph. The 11 acre Veterans Memorial Park that is the property of my VFW Post sustained some damage. I am the Park Chairman. All of the damage from Hurricane Rita has not been repaired. This responsibility has kept me from some of my duties as President of the 103d Association for which I apologize. Hopefully, this newsletter gets out in in timely manner.

I have enjoyed my tenure as President. Thanks for the opportunity to serve.

You will notice that we still do not have an editor. Any volunteers?. I know that the incoming President would appreciate this assistance.

Your old, but young at heart, buddy
JIM WHITE -President



HONOR ROLL

ADDRIAN, Harold G 410 Svc Co
BARTUS, William C 411 Co B
BATTILEGA, Harry L 410 Co C
BROCK, Raymond M 328MedCoC
BUCK, Richard L 328MedCoC
CHENEY, Leroy 328MedCoC
CLEFISCH, Glen G 409 Co D
CONRAD, George 411 Co C
CRADDOCK, Roger H 409 Co G
CROWELL, Harlen O 409 Co F
EASTER, William E 409 Co B
ENOCKSON, Carl F 410HQ3dBn
FINNEGAN, Patrick 328MedHQ

GIERULA, Edward J 328MedCoA
HAGAN, Herbert E 328MedHQ
JOHNSON, Roland D 328MedHQ
LAFLUER, Dewey 410HQ3dBN
MARTIN, Charles L 328MedCoC
MEEUWENBBEG, Chris 328MedCo
MORRIS, Ernest 409 Co D
PICKET, Emmitt W 409 Co E
PODZIMEK, Frank T 411 Co L
PRINGLE, George O 411 Co C
STEIN, Howard M 328MedHQ
THACKER, Troy D 328MedCoC

ABOVE ARE RECENT OR NOT PREVIOUSLY REPORTED

There will be a wreath laying ceremony at our monument in Gainesville, Texas on November 11th. The local VFW Post will provide a Color Guard, Rifle Salute, and Taps. A BBQ, fireworks, and a flyover and other activities will be provided by the city of Gainesville.

Additional Information can be obtained by calling "Rabbit" Lejeune Wilson at 972-233-1426 or RabbitW@aol.com or Mel Wright at 713-465-0814 or mel@hal-pc.org

Members of the 103d Infantry Division, on behalf of the association, will place a wreath on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington Cemetery at 10:15 AM on Tuesday, November 13th. After the wreath is placed on the tomb it will later be moved to the grave of General McAuliffe. After the ceremony there will be a noon buffet at the Officers Club at Fort Myer. If you plan to attend call Dick Ball at 703-671-9017 or by mail at 6012 Jan Mar Drive, Falls Church, VA 22041. Reservations for the buffet are required. Rooms have been reserved at the Days Inn, which is across the street from the once main entrance to Fort Myer, address 2201 Arlington Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22201(ph 703-525-0300). Additional nights are available. We will meet at the Days Inn at 9:15 AM on the 13th and travel as a group to the site of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

103D Infantry Division; The Trail of the Cactus revised, currently out of print, will be republished by Turner Publishing if Harold Branton, author, ph 281-399-1118 receives a minimum order for 100. (Currently has request for 29). The price will be \$55.00 each plus S&H. The book details the origins, organization and the whole life activities of the Cactus Division. Pictures, individual life stories, battle action, town and cities, sketches, listing of Silver Star recipients, veteran cemeteries abroad, and the overseas Cactus monuments. Send no money at this time.

A two year audit of the Association finances has recently been satisfactorily completed. Since Harold Branton was involved in this audit I have asked him to audit our finances for the year 2007. This will complete three consecutive years of audit as required by the State of Texas for continuance of our charter.

Mel Wright reports that The Texas Department of Transportation has installed signs 5' x 11' on each side of Interstate Highway 35 near the approach to the Texas Travel Center at Gainesville alerting travelers to our "World War II Monument."

The 103d Infantry Division Flag that has been used over the years at the reunions and at the wreath laying ceremony at The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier was retired at the reunion. It was replaced by an official ceremonial flag. The retired flag will be placed with other memorabilia in a museum at a later date. Three official 3' x 5' flags with gold fringe are available for \$65.00 each from Harold Branton (281-399-1114). Back orders may be filled with a minimum order of six.

Officers for 2008 President, Chan Rogers, Vice President Harley Richardson, Asst Vice President John Poole, Sec. & Treasurer Al Eucare, Sr, Exec. Sec Baxter Fite, III, Historian Lucas Martin, Chaplain Walter Modrzejewski, Board 409th Jim Enzor, Board 410th Arnold Marzullo, Board 411th Michael Toohig, Board Support Units Dick Ball, Board Associates Zack Sigler.

Pictures of the reunion were taken by Jerry Passmore.

Please keep your address, phone number, and e-mail address current with the Secretary Al Eucare, Sr.
6708 Lansdale St. District Heights, MD 29747 ph 301-736-2324 AEER@aol.com

GAINESVILLE TX MEDAL OF HONOR DAY



Mel and Thelma Wright join with the Dallas Rolls Royce Club and 5 of the Medal of Honor Recipients visiting the 103d Monument after the Parade.

Lower Photo: Mel Wright, Thelma Wright, Maggie Ricardi, Dr Nancy Phillips, Don Knobler, Rabbit Wilson, Margarita Wilson, Terry Anderson, Teresa Ross, Doug Handel, Jim Powell, Anna-Maya Powell.

Upper Left: L to R: Rabbit Wilson, David Mc Nerney, James Stone, Drew Dix, Don "Doc" Ballard, Mel Wright, Robert O'Malley. MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS ARE UNDERLINED

Upper Middle: TEXAS COMMEMORATIVE AIR FORCE flyover at parade.

Upper Right: Ross Volunteer Cadets from Texas A & M University bearing our colors at the parade.



Parade Grand Marshal (in passenger seat) is MOH recipient Jaclyn Lucas, he was the youngest to receive this medal since the Civil War. He was 6 days past his 17th birthday on Iwo Jima when he earned his medal. He lied about his age and went into the Marine Corps when he was 14. Wanted to "kill Japs". John Finn, our eldest attendee, is 97 and was not able to serve as our grand marshal due to his health that morning. Jack is 79. He and his wife Ruby are from Hattiesburg, Mississippi.

*Driver: Don Knobler
Dallas, Texas
Photographs by: Doug Handel
Dallas, Texas*

Cactus Patch Mail

(103d VETERAN) DICK MUSSETT'S DEDICATION DESCRIPTION

What a glorious day near the Oklahoma border was November 11, 2006. Cool breeze, brilliant sunshine, enormous boisterous crowd, great speeches and comfortable chairs. All of these combined to make the afternoon an utter delight to the participants and local people alike.

The memorial statue stands on a knoll of high ground easily seen from US- I-35 and the Texas Travel Information Center. From the base of the statue looking west into the sun you can see the old silo water tower from our time and the rolling brown hills were romped over that summer of 1944. You could almost hear the crunch of demo mortar fire or was it only the wind buffeting your hearing aids.

Barbara and I arrived at the site several minutes prior to the 1500 hr. start time. When you arrive from the south you have to go all the way to the Red River for a cross over (under) to double back to the west side of the highway. The river was running wild and almost blood red. Kinda scary. I can vaguely remember one night bivouac the company made to the bank of the river. It was so dark you could have almost walked right into the stream without knowing it.

Even a half hour before start time there was huge crowd of people, cars and trucks already there. We walked up the hill from the parking lot to the memorial site. Even from a hundred yards away the looming hulk of the covered statue stood out on the horizon. It was covered with an olive drab parachute that came down all the way below the pedestal. It looked like a miniature version of the Matterhorn in Switzerland.

A 16 ft cement walkway extends from the edge of the parking lot up to the memorial.

There was a brass quintet of soldiers from Fort Sill playing military tunes just to the right of the statue. If you looked back to the west and down the hill toward the parking lot you could see a sea of people crowding together for the festivities.

At that moment the festivities began so I returned to my seat on the second row of chairs not 20 feet from the podium. By the way, when we first arrived we sat down and the wife of the mayor of Gainesville was seated beside us. She is a charming young woman and extolled the virtues of living in Gainesville.

FROM 13 YEAR OLD Reid Keech

FROM MAYOR & CITY MGR OF GAINESVILLE

Mr. Lejeune "Rabbit" Wilson
6615 Harvest Glen Drive
Dallas, Texas 75248

Dear Mr. Wilson,

I would like to Congratulate you and Thank you for your commitment, dedication and hardwork to make this WWII historical monument possible.

My name is Reid Keech, I am thirteen years old and I live in Saint Louis, Missouri. I attended the dedication along with my family. We came in memory of my Grandfather, Raymond W. Richter. He served with the 103rd Battery "C" 92nd FA BN. Over the years, he and my grandmother attended several reunions. In August of 1945, he had met my grandmother in Innsbruck, Austria and brought her back to the US. They were married 57 years. Sadly, they both passed away two years ago. I wish they could have been in Dallas with us.

I enjoyed meeting many of the Veterans and listening to their stories. They were so interesting. Hopefully, next year, when the reunion is held in St. Louis, I can attend and revisit with the Veterans.

The bronze monument is an awesome tribute and remembrance to all the soldiers that fought and sacrificed their lives for us, so that we may live in freedom.

Thank you again, for making this beautiful and historical monument in their memory, so that we, future Americans will never forget.

Respectfully yours,

Reid
Keech



November 13, 2006

Mel Wright
9737 Warwona Rd
Houston, TX 77080

RE: 103d Infantry Division Maquette

Dear Mel,

The mayor humbly handed me the maquette Saturday evening after our Veterans' Day celebration. The craftsmanship of the piece is outstanding and you and your fellow infantrymen should be very proud of your accomplishments, not only on the battlefield but in immortalizing your efforts.

We will be displaying the maquette in the Gainesville City Hall's main entry. Our plans are to place it on a wooden pedestal and have it encased in a glass display. We will also have a nameplate to honor your contribution of the maquette.

We have been honored to work with you on this important project and look forward to your future visits to Gainesville.

Sincerely,


Reid Keech, Mayor


Mike Land, City Manager

City of Gainesville

Gainesville, Texas 72600

(940) 668-4300

Fax (940) 668-4318

OPERATION ROLL CALL (ORC) from Al Eucare

Thanks to all those who have responded to the ORC letter sent this past August to all listed on the Master Living Roster (MLR). Sending the three rosters (Unit, State, and Lost) was well worth the effort. For the first time ever, the technology of computer and internet made it possible to gather and distribute the mass of data contained in the rosters. Through our combined efforts communication can be even easier as the ORC program progresses and expands.

Volunteers from among our decedents are always welcome to contribute to the efforts in collecting and data entry of unit Morning Reports data. A new effort for ORC is the collection of an e-mail address for all those listed in the MLR. A pilot effort is underway for K Company 409th. and Wisconsin. This effort is being undertaken in order to establish a more timely system for notifying the Assn. of the death of a Cactus man and for notifying unit members and those living within the state. Ancillary to this effort is the development of Unit Representatives. They should be the first recipient of death notices from the family. Hence, knowing contact data of the Unit Rep. is paramount. A Roster of Unit Reps. Will be made available NLT next newsletter. Board member unit representative should continue to be notified.

It is planned to send all those listed on the MLR a CACTUS HISTORY CARD from On-Card Co. Your name and 103d history will be on the card. An annual calendar will be on one side of the card. You may order as many as needed for distribution to your relatives and decedents. The cost is \$1.00 each. For timely distribution for the coming holiday season please order NLT Sunday, November 11, VETERANS DAY. Order from Al Eucare, 6708, 6708 Lansdale St. District Heights, MD 20747 (AESR26@aol.com please provide e-mail addresses for the MLR and start subject with 103d ID)

The following are from the files of Harold Branton featuring Co. G 410th Infantry Regiment.

The 103d Infantry Division was committed to action on the ETO Line on 10 November 1944. Location: Heading northeast from the western heights overlooking the historic city of St. Die which was nestled astride the Meurthe River, Department of Lorraine, northeastern France. DIVISION MISSION: Attack in zone, drive the enemy from the Vosges Mountains, seize BARR, BLIENSCHWILLER, and DAMBACH; be prepared to march on SELESTAT.

Following a period of intense patrolling, the Division commenced the attack to the northeast; 409th Infantry on the left; the 410th on the division right; 411th initially in reserve, to seize SAULCY and protect the division right flank, to execute liaison with the 36th Infantry Division on right of zone. Resistance was heavy through the mountains, to stiffen severely on the evening of 29th November. Three fortified cities blocked the division's advance to the Rhine River plain and to the river. In-depth defensive positions were encountered along the eastern escarpment of the Vosges plateau. The 409th faced the city of DAMBACH ON THE RIGHT; THE 410TH faced BLIENSCHWILLER; and the 411th was to attack the fortified city of BARR on the left.

The fierce fighting is portrayed in the four selective individual awards presented following the battle.

1. AWARD OF SILVER STAR. Pfc Arthur W. Belliveau, Company G 410th Infantry. On 30 November 1944, in the vicinity of BLIENSCHWILLER, France. Pfc Belleveau's platoon was pinned down by an enemy machine gun. Leaving his sheltered position, Pfc Belliveau single handedly made an attack on the machine gun nest, killing four (enemy) with small arms fire and, although wounded, persisted in the face of small arms fire to wipe out the rest. With hand grenades he killed the five remaining enemy in the position. His platoon was thereafter able to continue its advance. Pfc Belliveau hailed from San Francisco, California.
2. AWARD OF SILVER STAR, POSTHUMOUSLY. Private William C. Weaver, Company G 410th Infantry. For gallantry in action. During the daylight hours of 30 November 1944 near BLIENSCHWILLER, France, the advance of the 2nd Battalion was blocked by enemy machine gun located on a hill above Company G's position. Pvt. Weaver, despite the intense small arms fire, single handedly attacked the machine gun nest. Although wounded in the leg by fire from the enemy gun, he crawled up the hill and firing directly into the machine gun forced the crew to take cover. As a result of his gallant action this unit was able to continue the advance. Pvt WEAVER was killed in a subsequent action. Residence Cleveland, Ohio.
3. AWARD OF BRONZE STAR MEDAL. Technical Sergeant Frederick J. Slyford, Company G 410th Infantry. For heroism in action. During the daylight hours of 29 November 1944, in the vicinity of BLIENSCHWILLER, France, TSgt Slyford advances to a key observation point under intense small arms machine gun fire and mortar fire. From this vantage point he observed an indeterminable number of enemy assembled for an attack. Realizing his hazardous position, TSgt Slyford rallied his small group and assaulted the enemy with hand grenades and small arms fire. Believing additional fire advisable, he dispatched two men to the rear to obtain a heavy machine gun. The machine gun was brought up and placed in a strategic position and fired directly into the enemy, completely disrupting their proposed action. He then remained with his group until medical aid could be obtained. Throughout the entire action TSgt Slyford's heroic action was in accordance with the highest traditions of the military service. Residence: Port Huron, Michigan.
4. AWARD OF BRONZE STAR MEDAL. Private First Class Gilbert A. Amendt. Company G, 410th Infantry. For heroism in action. On 29 November 1944, in the vicinity of Blienschwiller, France PFC Amendt, a Browning Automatic Rifleman, moved into position in an attempt to establish a firing position. Soon thereafter he was pinned down by enemy machine gun fire from both flanks. In the face of great danger and with magnificent courage, he crawled forward under fire to establish a new position from which he brought fire on one enemy machine gun, effectively silencing it. Again he was forced to withdraw because of machine gun fire from the other flank. When his squad leader was killed, Pfc Amendt assumed command and without further losses moved his squad to a concealed position. As a result of his sound judgment and heroic action the remaining enemy machine gun was silenced and his squad was spared further casualties. Residence: Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. In consequence of the successful attacks against the enemy by the brave men of Company G 410th and the other units of the 2nd Battalion and the 410, in conjunction with the 409th and 411th Infantry Regiments and supporting troops opening the gateway to the city of Selestat.



1. Registration



4. Welcome Party



7. Artifacts- Zack Sigler



2. Breakfast in the Hospitality Room- 3. Below Welcome Party



5. Welcome Party -
6. Artifact Display provided by Zack Zigler



8. Artifacts Baxter Fite III and Mike Bonak
9. Presentation of Retiring Flag





10. Presentation of New Colors



11. Al Eucare, Jim White, Chan Rogers
12. Banquet with new flag



13. President White-Pres. Elect. Rogers



14. Joey James Combo at Banquet
15. 50-50 winner



16. Another happy 50-50 winner



17. Banquet and visitation
18. followed by dancing

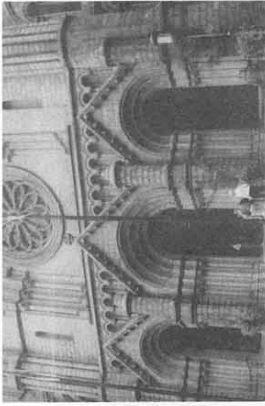




19. Walking to the Arch and Museum



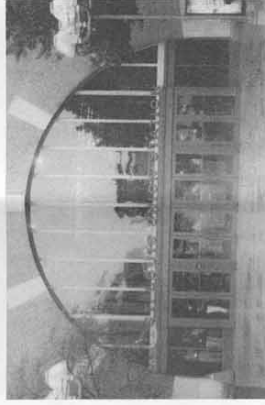
22. Historical display



25. Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis



20. Group inside the Arch Museum
21. historical display



23. St. Louis Union Station-
24. Mall view at Union Station



26. Ceiling Painting in the Cathedral-
27. walking to the Arch and Museum





28. Bus-St. Louis City tour



29. Bus-Paddlewheel Dinner Cruise-
30. Entrance to the Paddlewheel



31. Dinner Cruise



32. Dinner Cruise-Co. B 409
33. the Arch at night



34. Hotel Room Visitation



35. Just good friends and buddies-
36. Bob Hoff





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