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## 2010 REUNION ANNOUNCEMENT & NEWS

## 103d INF DIV WW II



## 2010 SAN ANTONIO REUNION

The next major event for the 103d ID Association is our annual reunion, which this year will be in San Antonio, Texas; a great city to visit, especially for those formerly involved in any phase of this country's military activities. We fought the Revolutionary War to gain our independence, the War of 1812 was fought to reaffirm the status gained as of 1781, and the Mexican War, fought in the 1840's, was the only other war which culminated in the addition of continental territory for this great country of ours. A signal event of that war occurred in San Antonio, however, that was not the reason your members assembled in Nashville in 2009 voted to go there this year. The choice to go there was predicated on the fact that San Antonio is simply a great city to visit, and Texans have a lot of bravado stemming from the fact they had to fight a war of their own to achieve their independence. A lot of that history is manifested in San Antonio which has the largest military base (Fort Sam Houston- the installation, not maneuver area) in the US before WW II). We have some significant events scheduled, as you will realize during those three days. The hotel is right in center San Antonio on the noted Riverwalk, the center of activity there. We hope many of you will attend; but unfortunately and realistically many will be unable to do so and I simply hope those that do will have an enjoyable time while there.

For those that are going, the first step is to make your reservation at the hotel for Wednesday night (the 14th of July) through Saturday night (the 17th) at the *Holiday Inn River Walk* by calling the hotel reservation line: 210-224-2500. The reunion room rate is good for up to 4 people (may have to add a roll away) and is available for 3 nights prior and after the reunion dates. When making your room reservations, please insure that you specify the bed(s) type and room arrangement. Those driving will be charged \$9/night fee for the garage parking for your car. Please refer to page 3 for other details of hotel arrangements; however, note that you must make reservations very soon to insure availability; however you may cancel anytime up to 72 hours prior to planned arrival without charge. Also note that your room rate includes a full breakfast buffet style each morning of your stay. The second step in the planning process is to make your reservations for all the activities/events you plan on attending. For this step, fill out the Reunion Reservation form (page 4) with the information required to reserve for each event and, of course, the charge and total cost for your desired activities. Please note that this form must be mailed so as to be received by **June 14, 2010** by the Reunion Planners at address as given on the form. Also, note that as our age is at a very fragile time, you might consider cancellation insurance for your protection.

**Unit Dinners** - Thursday night (July 15th) has been set aside for unit dinners which must be arranged separately through the hotel catering (sales) office if you desire to hold your dinner at the reunion hotel.

The Board of Directors will hold a meeting at 4:00 pm on Wednesday July 14th and any member may sit-in on the meeting. Our general Business Meeting will be held on Saturday at 8:30 am after our Memorial Service. We do not seem to have any pressing issues to resolve this year; but who knows what may come up in the meantime. There will always be a discussion of where the membership desires to hold the 2011 Reunion. By the way, after the Welcoming Buffet Dinner, I plan an informal discussion of any of the Association's issues that you may want to discuss. Looking forward to seeing you in San Antonio.

(See page 2 for The President's Information on past issues)

## President's Information and Up-date on On-going Issues.....

### 1. Up-date on "Trail of The Cactus" re-orders.

At the last moment, just before the press run started in late September '09, we increased our TOTC order to 225, up from 200, but which began at 100 in May, when the contract was signed. At the time the books were delivered on Nov 30, we had orders for 196. We actually mailed out 205 on Dec 7. By Jan 1, 2010, we had more orders than books available, and none to donate to the WW II libraries. This prompted a re-order contract with Turner by the 10th of January for 200 more; however, the price per book went to \$56. (We are charging \$60 to include postage.) That order was delivered on Mar 12 and our current status is as follows: We now have orders for 60± books from members, plus books for 12 libraries. We are holding shipment of any of the new order, awaiting the preparation of a four page 9 x 12 containing 12 new veteran's bios to insert in the new books. All books ordered and sent to date included the "slip-in" page identifying the additional plaques 1/410 put up in Hohwarth and Uhrwiller, as will all additional mailings. All libraries will also receive the 12 page color history of the story of the 103d's Monument at the Travel Info Center on I-35 in Gainesville, TX. All re-prints of the TOTC included the bound-in Supplement. I anticipate that all paid TOTC orders will be sent by May 3 and include books sent to the libraries approved by the B/D. Note: The Supplement is available @ \$12 for the first copy and \$10 each for additional copies to the same address. This should be of interest to all members who received the original "Trail of The Cactus" (14 years or more ago). The Monument History in 12-page color is available for \$7.50 each and these prices include postage.

### 2. The 103d ASSN Committed To Secure All Morning Reports For The Entire 103d ID From National Archives

This very vital project has unfortunately hit a "snag" due to the high number of "reels" now estimated to obtain the Morning Reports (M/R's) of the support elements (artillery, medical, engineers, etc) of the division and at \$85/reel, the total cost has jumped to \$7,000 over the budgeted amount, which we have to examine carefully, and hopefully find a financially achievable solution. We have currently ordered the 44 reels covering the 3 regiments and the amount required about equals the total originally budgeted for the entire division. At present, we suspect that the person (at the National Archives) has over estimated the task; however, this cannot be challenged until we receive and examine the regimental reels. The M/R's are needed to track soldiers and casualties and to advance the legacy of the 103d ID. Furthermore, there is great synergism surrounding the artifacts, memorabilia, and information Zack Sigler has on display at our reunions, attesting to the great interest our members have in this aspect of the 103d's reunions. I sincerely hope, we can solve this dilemma without more money than we now have; so we must first receive the regimental reels, review them, and move on from that experience. We will know more by reunion time and take action then. However, it is another reason to request: **Please, pay your 2010 \$25 dues; it is needed for this project!**

### 3. Identification of WW II Libraries and Museums

I had advised in NFTCP #23 that I would prepare a list of WW II Libraries/Museums that we (the 103d Association plus its individual veterans) will make contributions thereto and recommend that our veterans donate their writings, stories, experiences, (any literary piece) to their choice of these institutions as they see fit; however, with one important caveat, that is most important. In view of the fact that the Army Military History Institute at Carlisle, PA is the official repository of the US Army's history; it follows that all documents (copies thereof) should be deposited there as first and only place (where only one copy is available). Additional copies may then follow at other locations at the contributor's choice; however, I strongly suggest that copies be sent to as many libraries as you can manage. Reference List Page 9.

### 4. Prioritization of Literary Donations (As Among the Various Libraries)

The prioritization of contribution of written material is really up to the contributor. To start, the writer has a purpose for his writing and the fulfillment of the desire to make a contribution; thence the decision as to where this may be most effective must be with the writer. The basis or the mission of the library is very much of interest, and this is provided with the library identification and address list.

### 5. Repository for Artifacts (Uniforms, Weapons, etc)

This issue has not been resolved for the simple reason the local possibilities in the vicinity of the former Camp Howze do not have the physical space to accommodate the inventory we now have for display, much less the larger space required for that we perceive would be available. Furthermore, the large Army museums underway at Ft Belvoir and Fort Benning with the entire nation and over 80 divisions as potential to provide for cannot commit space until they are closer to the reality of stocking a finished facility. We are making plans for interim storage of our artifacts as a stop gap measure to hold items until a solution is available.



**HONOR ROLL**

**103d INF DIV ASSN of WW II**  
(Deceased reported after NFTCP issue No 23)

Bartus, William C.	411	Co B
Boyle, Sr David W.	409	Co C
Burton, William J.	384	FA Bty C
Emerick, David A.	103	Sig Co
Flynn, Jr Charles H.	409	Co A
Ford, Clifford H.	410	Co M
Gleason, William F.	409	Co K
Hawe, Zach F.	928	FA Bty B
Hays, Kenneth	409	Co L
Kozole, Stanley C.	411	Co D
Lanzi, Raymond	409	Co E
Moss, Perry	411	Sv Co
Nixon, Joseph P.	411	Co A
Nordin, Gustav N.	409	Hq Co 1Bn
Pan, Harding C.	409	Co E
Patterson, Stafford A.(Pat)	409	Co D
Shinstine, Merle	384	FA Hq Bty
Strada, Charles D.	409	Co E
Woollen, William M.	409	Co B

**CASUALTY STATS****10 HEAVIEST CASUALTY DAYS**

(As reported in the All Units Casualty Publication Page 380)

	<u>A</u>	Line Companies			
	<u>B</u>	Hq Companies			
	<u>C</u>	Support Units			
	<u>TOTAL</u>	A + B + C			
	<u>BD</u>	Battle Deaths (Included in Casualties)			
<u>Date</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>BD</u>
15/Mar/45	250	13	20	283	66
16/Nov/ 44	254	7	2	263	42
21 Mar/45	195	13	8	216	22
1/Dec/44	199	7	7	213	27
16/Mar/45	158	10	6	174	28
25/Jan/45	120	9	8	137	33
15/Dec/44	107	17	6	130	25
19/Jan/45	116	10	5	131	9
19Dec/44	121	7	1	129	31
20/Mar/45	110	14	3	127	14



**OUR FLAG IS AT HALF STAFF  
IN THEIR HONOR**

*(Flag photo courtesy of our deceased comrade Pierce Evans)  
His website PAPAS WEB remains as a legacy*

Report known deaths to your Secretary Treasurer  
Gloria McLeod  
7618 Twin Hills Dr  
Houston, TX 77071  
gmacl@swbell.net  
for recording into our Historical Records

## THE FRENCH SHOW ALLEGIANCE TO AMERICAN VETERANS

*When I discovered how enthusiastic the French are when they get the opportunity to thank their American liberators, I immediately felt obligated to present the wonderful story direct to you by the 103d ID Association's French Ambassadors par excellence: Francine Veilleux & Robert French. Francine's first and only until 18 language was French while growing up in Québec. Their story is opposite the one given Americans by a generation of post-war French leaders. (Editor Rogers)*

"Every June, the media pays a lot of attention to the many descendants of American veterans who find their way to the beaches of Normandy. Likewise, Robert French and Francine Veilleux came to Rougville to retrace the steps that Robert's father took in 1944. Edward French was a staff sergeant in the 103d ID, the division that experienced combat in the valley of Taintrux." Thus began an article that appeared in the *Vosges Matin* on March 2, 2010, written by Fabienne Loubette and which was prompted by a gathering attended by some 35 people in town. In attendance were many of the people we interviewed in the past four years, the mayor of Taintrux, and M. Jean-Claude Fombaron, president of the Société Philomatique Vosgienne (SPV).

This year in February, Bob and I visited Taintrux for the third time in four years. Every time we visit, we find that people have been eager to tell us their personal stories around World War II; they also want to convey their immense gratitude and appreciation for the American soldiers who liberated them. When we mention that Bob's father was here in November 1944 with the 103d Division, people's faces light up and those old enough to remember volunteer

information about their own memories.

The following testimonials came from people we interviewed, and also, from people who stopped us in stores or on the streets:

❖ Twenty at the time of liberation, Claudine's mother lived with her mother and younger brother on a small, isolated farm. She remembered how terrified of the Germans they all were. She recalled the hard times during the war, having so little and having to restrict their movement out of fear of the Germans, and the terrible destruction of Saint-Dié. They appreciated the American soldiers and saw them as their saviors and heroes.

❖ Living with a son on an old farm in the Rougville Valley, Mme Simone Quirin was delighted to meet Bob, the son of an American soldier, and talk with us about our quest. She recalled that the American soldiers came to the rescue and saved their lives and homes. Although

much of Saint-Dié was destroyed by the retreating Germans, Rougville remained largely undamaged (having been entirely destroyed in the first months of World War I) because of the American soldiers. She has fond memories of the soldiers.

❖ The first time we met André Grandjean, he told us his earliest memory of the American soldiers when they reached Saint-Dié. Then seven years old, he remembered with much joy how the American soldiers gave the children items from their rations, including a yellow-tasting powder and chewing gum. They also gave them toothpaste in a tube, another novelty. The inhabitants' *dentifrice* came in small cakes that were difficult to use; so they loved squeezing toothpaste from a tube. André told us many wartime stories from the perspective of a young boy—including the German atrocities he witnessed and the injuries he received on two occasions. Always when he talked to us about the

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From the Monument looking east over the Alsatian Plain. Vineyards in foreground



On the wall on the near-by French Military Cemetery of the French First Army is the inscription (here translated into English) "In Remembrance of our Comrades of the Allied Armies who nobly fell for the Liberation of France".



The 103d ID Monument in St Die adorned with flowers in the middle of winter!





Some 40 people gathered in the Taintrux community hall to hear about Bob and Francine's research. Presiding is Jean-Claude Fombaron, president of the Société Philomatique Vosgienne (Society of Vosgian Science and Philosophy), remembered the time of liberation by the 103d Division. The mayor of Taintrux, Bernard Saint-Dizier, sits on Francine's left side in the front row.



In the Taintrux home of Evelyne & Dany Gérardin relaxing around the table after a multiple course authentic French meal, looking at old family photos, and reminiscing about their mother, Suzanne Conraux, who was 16 at the time of liberation of Taintrux.



In the home of Bertrand & Fabienne Loubette, in Rougville. Fabienne wrote a newspaper article about Bob & Francine's research. Pictured are their three sons appropriately showing the 103d Cactus Patch.



At the nursing home in St Die visiting Suzanne Conraux, who two years before showed where she lived when the 103d liberated Taintrux.



Maurice Lipka sports a 103d T-shirt. A resident of St-Die, he is an enthusiast of the 103d ID and has attended a number of our reunions.

(continued from page 6)

American soldiers, he expressed much gratitude and awe for what they did. He told us, "We would all be dead or be Germans now if the Americans had not saved us". He recalled feeling a sense of relief upon the arrival of the American soldiers; they had come to the rescue. André remembered when the American soldiers marched down the main street. He described how people lined both sides of the street, cheering the Americans. It was an emotional event with many people crying while waving at the soldiers who had saved them.

❖ When we stopped at a little bookstore to purchase topographic maps, André explained to the store clerks why we are here. An elderly woman approached us to tell us about the first American soldier she encountered. She was 22 at the time and this soldier gave her a chocolate bar. She said this small gift meant more to her than she could express. She recalled that the soldiers were friendly toward the people, especially to the children. They were their liberators; they made them feel safe; they offered hope. For this, she said, she will always be grateful. We are touched by her story and I sense that she is touched by our presence, touched that Bob would want to come to the place where his father and the other men in the 103d helped shape the future of these people.

❖ Évelyne told us that her grandmother had died on November 18, 1944 after being wounded four days prior in the fighting. Évelyne recounted the story of her mother Suzanne, then 16 years old, who saw her mother suffer for four days; who closed her mother's eyes upon her death because she was alone with her; and who stood in the yard and watched neighbors bury her body. Évelyne recalled her mother's stories of those days when the American soldiers were advancing and simply could not stop to help all the wounded civilians. They did, however, give out medication and first-aid supplies to the people who needed them. We eventually met Suzanne (Évelyne's mother) and she told us her story in her own words. Suzanne remembered a young American soldier who had been 'sweet' on her. He had given her a picture of his sister, along with his name and address. He had urged her to contact him if she were ever in need of anything. She remembered fondly that he and other soldiers had sung "Oh

Suzanna" to her. After losing her mother so tragically, she lost his contact information and confessed that she always wondered, "What if? Within a month of telling us her story, Suzanne suffered a massive stroke, which left her blind and at times confused. Her daughter was happy to see that her mom remembered us vividly and was excited about our visiting her in the nursing home where she now lives.

❖ Noëlla Durant was six when the 103d Division attacked across Taintrux Valley to take the hill mass southwest of Saint-Dié and high ground east of Taintrux. She wrote, "I was born on September 11, 1938 in the house in which we now live. We heard the church bell. The men had to go to the town hall and the Germans were collecting all of them, even the men who were on their way to work and they drove them to the train station to put them on trains to an unknown destination. So there remained women and children; I was little but I remember well. We had a nice, well-constructed cellar under the house for shelter. Two neighboring families came to stay with us, since they didn't have cellars to protect themselves from the shelling. (The German troops were using the house as a command post and first aid station.) One day, in their cellar office, the Germans were running everywhere and their "phone" was always on. We understood some of the words: "The Americans are coming." We understood that the Americans were here to save us. They had arrived on the mountain in the back of M. Grandjean's house [la Tête de Blainbois]. The Americans were chasing the Germans and we were very happy. They helped us out of the cellar—our eyes were hurting—and gave us food and drink."

As we visited people, we noticed that many houses in Taintrux sport artillery shells serving as umbrella stands. Raymonde, a woman we met two years ago and revisited this year, explained that for years these shells were sold for scrap metal bringing in a little much-needed cash. However, most families kept one to use as an umbrella stand and, she added, for a conversation piece; the perfect segue for the many WWII stories told over the years. Indeed, we consider ourselves very fortunate to have heard many of their stories.

Jean-Claude Fombaron commented at the gathering mentioned above, that although the combat history of WWII is very well known

to them, the histories of the men who fought are a different matter. We shared with them the stories we heard at the 103d Division reunions we have attended and the French are most touched by this connection. Monsieur Fombaron stated that we helped put a human face on the American soldiers they have been thinking of all these years. We found that people young and old are most interested in history. The mayor of Taintrux was pleased to receive a copy of *Trail of the Cactus* for the town's archives.

Appreciation and respect are evident in the well-kept appearance of the three 103d Division memorials. Even in the cold-weather month of February, planted flowers adorn the bases of the memorials in Saint-Dié and Pfaffenhoffen. André told us that this is a tribute to the American soldiers who made such sacrifices and ultimately saved them. Children are taught history in very effective ways. For example, some young schoolchildren were taken on a field trip to an American military cemetery last fall.

We were fortunate to have the opportunity to visit the museum in Colmar, which was entirely devoted to remembering the Colmar pocket. The museum director was most grateful for having been sent *Trail of the Cactus*. Although the 103d Division did not participate in the Colmar campaign, the director showed an interest in having information for the museum history of the 103d division to include in its collection. We sent a copy of an early 1945 issue of stars and stripes that Bob's father had saved to the museum for their displays.

In 1995 above the village of Sigolsheim, Alsace – France, the Rhine and Danube Association erected a World War II memorial honoring the American soldiers who fought to liberate Alsace. Standing near the top of Hill 351, the impressive monument, with an American flag flying over it, overlooks the Alsatian Plain. Listed on the flag base are the American divisions that took part in liberating Alsace: the 103d ID is on the bottom line—right. We had an adventure locating this World War II monument but we wrote directions so others can find their way a bit more easily.

Close by, on the top of the hill is the *Nécropole nationale* (military cemetery) of the French First Army—established in 1965. On a cemetery wall is the inscription (here translated into English): "In remembrance of our comrades of the Allied armies who nobly fell for the liberation of France" ■

By Francine Veilleux



## OVERVIEW OF WW II LIBRARIES

As editor of the 103d ID WW II Association's newsletter (NFTCP), I believe it desirable to advise the membership of the identification of libraries around the country interested in accepting and making available for study/review material prepared by veterans describing their combat period experiences. All of these libraries have a WW II interest, however, some are very selective as to what they accept for availability to patrons for their review. The first three are owned and operated by federal government entities, and #1 & #2 accept individual veterans stories in conformance with directions sent forth in mail-out material sent by request, or any material printed in book form. No. 3 is the reference library of the US Army Command and General Staff College, required of all officers for rank above captain, and only interested in formal (printed book) material generally dealing with unit performance in combat. Nos 4 & 5 are privately endowed but publicly sanctioned on US property museums with great attention to artifacts of war. (Both are aggressively soliciting funds as they develop) While they profess that printed documents of individual veterans are of interest, the proof will unfold as these both evolve: No 4 is in design & No 5 just completed construction. Nos 6 & 7 are both educational institutions with widely divergent interests and capacity, however, both are primarily interested in individual experiences of the veteran. FSU is a large institution with a large endowment and commitment to all veteran's experiences, regardless of origin or professional development of the presented work. (Note: As graduate of Orlando HS, I became involved 15 years ago, however, with Brokaw's endowment it became universal in its interests.) NCTC is a small regional college with limited assets, however, the college is interested in being a repository for the experiences of those veterans of the 103d ID, primarily stemming from the presence of the monument at the I-35 Travel Info Center and that the division trained at Camp Howze. Since NCTC has limited facilities, they cannot accept artifacts. The next two institutions, Nos 8 & 9, are well established, privately owned museums, with adjunct library capability (although not featured), however, in my opinion, only the New Orleans (formerly - the D-Day Museum) facility has possibilities for individual stories. The last two institutions are in different categories, but reasonably not available for individual story material. I trust this will clear up some of your questions, and if you desire more information call Luke Martin 302-436-4928 or Chan Rogers 508-533-0422.

## WORLD WAR II LIBRARIES/MUSEUMS

1. **Veterans History Project** - Library of Congress  
101 Independence Ave. SE  
Washington, D.C. 20540-4615  
Phone # 1-888-371-5848 (web site: www.loc.gov/vets)
2. **US Army Military History Institute** (The Official Depository for the US Army)  
Attn: Mr David J. Kennaly, Registrar Phone #717-245-4672  
950 Soldiers Drive  
(Ridgeway Building)  
Carlisle, PA 17013-5021
3. **The US Army Combined Arms Research Library** (Adjunct to C&GS College)  
Attn: Ms Kathy Buker, Chief Special Collections, Phone #913-758-3161  
250 Gibbons Ave  
Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027
4. **The Army Historical Foundation** (The National Museum of the United States Army)  
Attn: Mr Matthew Seelinger, Chief Historian  
Phone #703-522-7901, Ext 4166  
2425 Wilson Boulevard (Museum in design, construction scheduled to begin 2011)  
Arlington, VA 22201
5. **The US Army National Infantry Museum & Soldier Center**  
Attn: Mr Edward Annabel, Acting Director. Phone #706-545-5776  
1775 Legacy Way  
Columbus, GA 31903
6. **The Institute on World War II and The Human Experience**  
Florida State University (Tom Brokaw Endowed & Supported)  
Attn: Ms Jennifer Quijano, Archival Assistant Phone #850-644-9033  
P.O.Box 3062200  
Tallahassee, FL 32306-2200
7. **North Central Texas College** (NCTC Library)  
Attn: Diane Roether, Library Director, Phone # 940-668-4283  
1525 W. California Street  
Gainesville, TX 76240-4699
8. **World War II Victory Museum**  
Attn: Mr Josh Conrad, Curator Phone # 260-927-9144 ext 224  
5634 CR 11A P.O.Box 1  
Auburn, IN 46706
9. **The National World War II Museum** (Formerly "D-Day" Museum)  
Attn: Seth Paradon, Chief Archivist, Phone # 504-527-6012 ext. 317  
945 Magazine Street  
New Orleans, LA 70130-3813
10. **Morton Museum of Cook County**  
Attn: Cathy Farquhr, Curator (Harold Branton donated TOTC in '06)  
P.O. Box 150  
Gainesville, TX 76240
11. **Musee Memorial des Combats de la Poche de Colmar**  
Attn: Christian BURGERT / Conservateur  
25, rue du Conseil  
68230 TURCKHEIM - France



## TAKE HEED ASTP'ers - WE HAVE BEEN VINDICATED!

**T**hanks to Robert French, our Associate member of the Board of Directors, who recently discovered a significant report: *The Procurement and Training of Ground Combat Forces*, published in 1948 by the Department of Army, referencing the policies and problems of the newly formed Army Ground Forces, a component of the US Army, encountered in providing the needed and fully trained **2 million man force** deemed necessary to "win" the ground war. The studies and bases of this report were written in 1943 by the Historical Section of Headquarters, Army Ground Forces. For openers: "Ground Combat in WW II required complex skills, which were in large part technical. In addition to mastering the use of a dozen weapons, he had to acquire an elementary knowledge of many additional things: camouflage & concealment, mine detection & removal, patrolling & MAP reading, combat intelligence, first aid, field sanitation and maintenance of life & health out-doors over extended periods, and the ability to survive during periods of extreme weather conditions. The knowledge and skills which the infantryman must need in combat were such that they could Not be reduced to an anticipated routine. Furthermore, the mobile tactics & open formations of WW II demanded the greatest possible physical vigor & mental alertness in the individual combat soldier and required strong powers of leadership in commanders, as small as the squad unit. The intelligence, skill, & stamina of semi-isolated riflemen and small-unit **commanders** were to determine not only survival on the battlefield, **but**, in many cases, **the outcome of battle.**"

A very compelling statement by the War Department Mar 1942: "The increased tempo of the war today, its rapid changes in local situations, and the great spaces it covers makes it

impossible for commanders to control the detailed action of subordinate units. Hence the accomplishment of the will of the commander depends, in the final analysis, upon the ability of subordinates to make the proper decisions in unpredictable situations on the battlefield. These decisions require sound judgment and initiative-qualities which must be carefully developed and fostered in the training of every individual."

Later, the War Department came to the conclusion: That the quality of the enlisted personnel in the Infantry *must be raised!* General Marshall on Feb 10/44 informed the Secretary of War that 134,000 already basic trained were required for the coming operation in France and that "the outstanding deficiency currently noted in our divisions is the number of noncommissioned officers WHO are below satisfactory standards of intelligence and qualities of leadership." The alternatives he presented were to cut 80% of the ASTP, OR eliminate 10 divisions, 3 tank battalions, and all 26 CONUS antiaircraft battalions. The sacrifice of the ASTP was one means, among others, of meeting the critical need for a speedy rehabilitation of the ground arms.

Two other quotes from the report: "On Dec 21/43, Gen McNair (CG of Ground Forces) proposed a change (i.e. the assignment of ASTP & air cadets to infantry units) to the War Department and after summarizing the causes of the relatively low quality of personnel in the ground arms, he restated his belief that the sub-average percentage of ground soldiers in the upper intelligence levels had contributed to the **high casualty rate of infantrymen.**" "Thirty-five Divisions received on average over 1,500 ASTP students each, twenty-two divisions received on average

about 1,000 aviation cadets each. All divisions still in the US, except those scheduled for earliest shipment overseas and the 10th Mountain Division, which contained an exceptional proportion of high-grade men, received infusions of the new manpower. Some infantry divisions, those which were most depleted or which had the lowest intelligence ratings, obtained over 3,000 men from the two sources combined. *All divisions assigned the ASTP students and aviation cadets mainly to their infantry components.*"

**Observed Results of Manpower Transfer of ASTP'ers & Aviation Cadets to Infantry** - "The effect on the training of troops was immediate. Divisions whose officers and men were depressed by the loss of their old personnel, and discouraged by the thought that they might become purely replacement organizations doomed not to go overseas as units, were revived in spirit by the incoming trainloads of high-quality young men. The newcomers faced a difficult problem of personal readjustment, since their sudden transfer to the Infantry placed them in a type of service very different from all they had been led to expect. They nevertheless proved with a few exceptions to be excellent soldiers. With their superior intelligence, they could absorb infantry training more rapidly than the type of men usually received by the ground arms. Divisions could therefore, despite personnel turnover, still meet the readiness dates required by strategic plans." "After inspecting certain of these divisions, **Gen McNair reported that with a period of retraining they would be better divisions than those previously dispatched to the war theaters!**" (Note: All the foregoing statements were contained in the quoted document.)

Your Editor's conclusions follow on the next page.



**TAKE HEED ASTP'ers.....**

..continued w/Conclusions/ Observations

For the record, merely to qualify for ASTP, one had to score 130 on the AGCTest (basically an IQ Test) while OCS required 120, and enlistments in general a threshold of 80. Also for the record, that does NOT, of itself, make ASTP'ers more intelligent than another group, but for this discussion we will assume that it does. Furthermore, the US Army (WAR Department) had a very compelling manpower requirement at the beginning of 1944 for 120,000± men for infantrymen to fill 30 or more divisions to full strength, and additionally to provide a reservoir of replacements for the 68 divisions

required for the invasion of France and the completion of the Allied effort in winning the war in Europe! On the other hand, there was NO compelling or immediate need for 140,000 red-blooded, superbly physically conditioned, intelligent, and **already basic infantry trained** men who just happened to be in college doing ASTP. We ALL know which way that went! **AND LOOK at the RESULTS!!! Like it or not, We made superb soldiers! Whether** on KP, reading a map, leading a patrol, rallying the squad when the squad leader was hit, or what ever, we would take over to complete the mission. In spite of the fact, we did not like where we were, we strongly believed in doing the best we could at every turn of the action, and that is

**what made good soldiers!**

**The 103d had a great cadre** of officers and senior NCO's plus the infusion of as many as 3000 ASTP'ers, ex air-force cadets, and former coast and anti-aircraft artillerymen to round out the division, and then train only 3 & 1/2 months, before deploying to France. (Remember, the last batch of replacements left on June 6!) The 103d gave a GREAT account of itself in the 6 months it was on-line and proof of that came when Gen Eisenhower made "Nuts" McAuliffe the CG after two months of action. He would never have turned over a mediocre performer to a new CG of McAuliffe's stature if the record had not supported that move! ■

**TOUR CANCELLATION INSURANCE**

Protect yourself from unforeseen ~~expenses~~ expenses caused by sickness, injury or any other causes that impact your travel plans. This insurance enables a refund of Tour & Banquet expenses up until three (3) days before the start of your reunion. If you need to cancel – please call our office immediately (817-251-3551) for a cancellation number. If you have not purchased cancellation insurance all tour and meal money is non-refundable 6 weeks prior to the reunion.

**Important Reunion Notes:**

- ~ Tours may be cancelled if a minimum of 30 people per bus is not met. In this case, full refunds will be given.
- ~ Please understand that a certain amount of walking is necessary from the bus to attractions and in some instances, to also see the attractions. Please consider your abilities before purchasing tours.
- ~ Be sure to bring photo identification (like a driver's license) on all events.
- ~ All tour times are subject to change. A final itinerary is available at registration.
- ~ Exact vessel for the cruise is subject to change based on availability and/or final tour count.

**Reservations are due by June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2010.** Late reservations accepted on a space available basis with a non refundable \$10 per person late fee. You should make a copy of this form for your records. For information call weekdays: 817-251-3551 or Email: [info@MilitaryReunionPlanners.com](mailto:info@MilitaryReunionPlanners.com). Requests for refunds must be made in writing and postmarked before due date above. No refunds will be made after this date, unless you have purchased *Tour Cancellation Insurance*. Sorry, no refunds will be given starting 3 days before the reunion for any reason. There is a \$10 per person refund processing fee. Your cancelled check is your receipt and proof of purchase. There is a \$25 return check fee for NSF. For a written confirmation please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope. MRP will not be held liable for failure of vendors to provide contracted services or any injuries/accidents that may occur during the reunion. Tours require a minimum of 30 people in order to operate. Full refunds given for any cancelled Event.

## FRENCH MONUMENT IN COLMAR



103D INF DIV ASSOC WW II  
7618 Twin Hills Drive  
Houston, TX 77071

Beautiful monument in a prominent location near the top of Hill 351 overlooking the Alsatian Plain and the Rhine River flood plain. The American Flag is flood lighted and flies 24/7 to commemorate the liberation of Alsace by the Americans and displays the eight division patches of the 7th US Army engaged in this section of Alsace. Displayed are the 36th ID, 3rd ID, 45th ID, 75th ID, 103d ID, 28th ID, 12th AD, 63rd ID, & the 21st Corps patches. This monument was completed in 1995 by a private French citizen group dedicated to recognizing the American Liberation of this French Province. It is located just outside the village of Sigolsheim, 7 km NW of Colmar and adjacent to a National French Military Cemetery. A copy of our "Trail of the Cactus" has been donated to a French military history museum in Turckheim, just west of Colmar.

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