

Nov. 2011

NEWS FROM THE CACTUS PATCH

Issue No 29

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2012 REUNION ANNOUNCEMENT & NEWS

103d INF DIV WW II



Holiday Greetings **Happy Holidays!!**

NEW ORLEANS WAS GREAT. KANSAS CITY IS NEXT IN 2012

Our members had a fantastic time in The "Big Easy" by everyone's account! I have numerous letters, notes and telephone calls attesting to the great time had by all at our 2011 reunion in New Orleans. Later herein is a critique of our social activities. During our New Orleans business meeting, you voted to go to Kansas City in 2012, we promoted our associate B/D member and webmaster, Larry Wayne to the position of vice president, we added associate member, David E. Gilbert (son-in-law of Earle Hayes - I/410) to the B/D replacing Bob Quinn (voluntary retirement), and we added John Anania(103d Sig Co) to the B/D as Dick Ball's replacement (Dick, unfortunately is beset with extreme dementia). With this transition in the members of the 103d ID WW II Association's Board of Direction, we are continuing to move in a concerted effort to preserve the legacy of the outstanding performance of the 103d ID in WW II. At this time, we have completed and confirmed arrangements with a hotel in Kansas City, MO for our 2012 Reunion, and these details are provided later herein. We are continuing in the process of re-publishing several very interesting WW II personal stories by 103d veterans: *Combat Diary*, by Gustav Enyedy, Jr (I/409) is finished and available at \$35.00/copy including postage; *Papa's War* by Pierce Evans (103d Sig Co) and *Combat Stories* by John T. Dorsey (I/411) are both in the final throes of preparation for printing and possibly ready for mailing by the end of the year. Cpt Roger Craddock's very interesting experiences as a rifle company commander, including all G/409 Morning Report (M/R) entries and casualty records is currently on hold due to family privacy concerns.

The 103d ID WW II Association Website. Our 103d website is producing some very interesting inquiries, particularly, many that connect 103d veterans and their descendants seeking information direct concerning their WW II service. In addition, there are also "hits" on the website that stem from a variety of tangential interests, such as: an author seeking background information relative to potential prominent Nazis escaping and going underground; and, third generation Germans very interested in preserving the legacy of the Seigfried Line. The 103d Association has assigned our newly established vice-president, Larry Wayne, to undertake and prepare our response to all viable website inquiries, and when desirable, to request support from others to assist as required to fulfill the response. We have included a report by Larry in this issue describing the inquiries and his responses. In my opinion, the establishment of the 103d website was a significant advancement in promulgating the 103d's WW II legacy and Larry Wayne was the right person to make it HUM! Reference Larry's overview of the hits on the website he has fielded. (Page 4)

The 103d ID WW II Association is gradually changing! Please reference the mast-head of officers and note the number of Associate members now directly responsible for our operations. This evolution will progress as a natural occurrence and is essential for our effectiveness. This change is healthy and inevitable!

"KANSAS CITY - HERE WE COME!"

When Cranston told me we were going to Kansas City, my first reaction was "WHAT?". All I know about Kansas City is that it was a stop for the wagon trains on their way West. Well, thanks to my new best friend, "BEAR", (I can't wait to lock wheels with him), and Jim White and Stratton Sigler - let me tell you - you are in for one bodacious time. After doing some research I find out that Kansas City is the convention center of these United States. It has over 50 direct, nonstop flights each day from all over the country. Originally, when I tried for the first week in July, well that's out, because they are hosting the Major League All-Star Baseball game. In fact, all of July is out because that is one of their busiest months. They host conventions for thousands at a time. In fact, there are over 1000 restaurants and hotels in Kansas City. More than \$9 billion in major improvements are under way across Kansas City - \$4.5 billion in downtown development. This includes the new downtown entertainment and nightlife district. Kansas City is known for its blues, its booze, and its barbecues. From the early '20's to the early 40's, jazz reigned in Kansas City and flourished during Prohibition when political boss Tom Pendergast allowed alcohol to flow freely. The largest new development project in the Midwest is the eight-block Kansas City Power & Light District which has energized downtown KC into a 24-hour-a-day entertainment destination.

KC is known as the "Paris of the Plains". There are more fountains than in Rome and more boulevards than in Paris. After a \$200 million dollar renovation, thanks to the nation's first bi-state tax, Union Station is the second largest working train station in the nation, featuring a science center, rail museum, theater district, and Amtrak service. Walt Disney opened his first animation studio in Kansas City, Laugh-O-Gram Studios, where he fed a small mouse that eventually became the inspiration for Mickey Mouse. In 1910, Joyce Hall began selling postcards out of a shoe box in Kansas City, today his company has grown to the world's largest greeting card maker, Hallmark cards. Get your passport to fun when you walk through the door. You'll be transported to a place where everyday's a holiday and there's always a reason to celebrate.

A few miles north of KC is Fort Leavenworth, the oldest active United States Army post west of Washington, D.C., and has been in operation for over 180 years, historically known as the "Intellectual Center of the Army." The garrison supports the United States Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) by managing and maintaining the home of the United States Army Combined Arms Center (CAC). CAC's mission involves leader development, collective training, Army doctrine and battle command (current and future). Fort Leavenworth is home to the Military Corrections Complex, consisting of the United States Disciplinary Barracks, the Department of Defense's only maximum security prison, and the Midwest Joint Regional Correctional Facility. In addition, the Fort Leavenworth Garrison supports numerous tenant organizations that directly and indirectly relate to the functions of the CAC, including the United States Army Command and General Staff College, my Cranston, being one of its graduates and the Foreign Military Studies Office.

Now, perhaps the most important destination for our group is a few miles to the east, Independence, Missouri, home to our 33rd President. Harry S Truman. Truman was the most American of Americans, a man who confounded the nation and the world after coming to the presidency in FDR's giant shadow. What a day I have planned for you, complete with Harry and Bess..... You won't want to miss it.

Well, after checking out 837 hotels, okay, maybe not that many, I have decided on a fabulous boutique hotel called: The Aladdin. A small hotel built in 1920, and after several million dollars in renovations, it has been brought back to the original art deco style.

After a top drawer Board Meeting on Wednesday afternoon, pack your heat, put on your hat, grab your moll, and all are invited to the Zebra Lounge for a scrumptious evening where "Mr. Pendergast", by the way, will be your guest speaker. Come raise your glass to him. Another guest for the evening will be the one and only, the very brave, very persistent, Mike Morado. Please refer to the Feb 2010 Newsletter (#24) for his story, or e-mail Cranston for a copy. Mike is our very own hero.

During the next few days you will be discovering the diversity, uniqueness and vitality of KC with its cosmopolitan flair and beauty. Enjoy every moment!

Fran Rogers



Vice President Harry S. Truman with Bess and President FDR waiting in KC for the 103rd ID WWII Association Reunion to begin in August 2012.



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103d WEBSITE UPDATE *by Larry Wayne 103d VP & Webmaster*



Larry Wayne

Greetings to all Cactusmen and members of the 103d Association. Since the last update, we have added several items to the website. Biographical summaries for Pvt Steve Kopiniski, Co I 411th, who we just learned has become the 848th KIA during the 103d ID combat operations, 1LT Harry Schweikert, Co I 410th, Pfc Herb Morgan, Co D 409th, and Cpl Leonard J. Salathe, Jr, I&R Platoon, Hq Co 410th. Also, we acquired, through the generosity of Al Eucare, the 103d Division Headquarters General Orders from division activation, Nov 1942 to Sept 1, 1945. All of the General Orders, with the exception of 8 missing GO's, were transcribed and put into a searchable Excel Database. It is now possible to search by name, unit, date, or General Order number, or by specific award. Additionally, effort is underway to scan each General Order, for cross reference purposes, and we have completed and posted on the web all available General Orders from Nov 1942 through the end of Dec 1944. The remaining General Orders for 1945 should be posted within the next few weeks.

One addition, that will be added by the time you receive this newsletter, is a Books, CD, & Memento Page. We invite you to peruse this page. http://www.103didww2assn.org/books_mementos.htm For those who remember the weekly newspaper **CAMP HOWZE HOWITZER**, during training at Camp Howze, we have secured permission to link from the Camp Howze Training Web Page to The Texas A&M University-Commerce Libraries, Cook County Public Library and Morton Museum of Cook County, Texas where you can access their collection covering the 1 August 1943 to 4 August

1944 time period. Access our website with the link at http://www.103didww2assn.org/camp_howze.htm

We are also happy to announce that communication through the website continues from those who are seeking information about relatives and friends. Several links were placed on the World War II Talk forum where family members of 103d veterans were seeking additional information. The Forum Moderator wrote that of all the World War II Association sites on the internet, the 103d was one of the most complete sites he has researched. Thanks to all of you for the input that has created that distinction for the 103d WWII Association site. The daughter of PFC John DiBartolo, Co F 409th, was able to acquire long sought after information about her Dad after years of trying as a result of the efforts of all to post historical information on the website. John Sears acquired supporting documentation covering the details of his being wounded-in-action (WIA). As a result of SGM Sears request, Steve Ropa learned that his uncle, Pvt Steve Kopinski, was indeed Killed In Action (KIA) while serving with the 103d and ultimately Pvt Kopinski became the 848th KIA 66 years after the war's end and his name is to be added to the monument on Memorial Day 2012. Periodically, we receive updates from the German Organization researching the area around the Siegfried Line. This group reports that the information on the 103d website is invaluable to them as they learn more about operations in and around that historic place. There are many who have sent photos, stories, and information about veterans who served with the 103d Infantry Division. Remember, this is your site. Please let me know if you have any suggestions or material you would like to add to the website. The website address is <http://www.103didww2assn.org>. You may contact me through my email address info@103didww2assn.org. Thanks for all your support and efforts.

Larry Wayne

HONOR ROLL



103d INF DIV ASSN of WW II
(Deceased reported after NFTCP issue No 27)

Brewer	John	409 Co K
Brown	Robert E	410 Co E
Bruce	Dr. Ernest E.	409 Co B
Carameros Jr.	George D.	409 Co F
Chaffee	Harlan E.	103 Sig Co
Cleeson	Roger A.	409 Co D
Clement	Howard R.	411 Co F
Cutler	Granville B.	103 Band
Davis	George J.	409 Co C
Davis	Harlan B.	411 Co F
Doepke	Leslie V.	410 Co H
Gabiner	Seymour	411 Co K
Ganson	Herbert G.	409 AT Co
Geary	Russel B.	411 Hq Co 1Bn
Genovese	Sebastian R.	410 Co C
Hale	Earl P.	411 Co G
Haynes	James E.	409 Med Det
Hookham	Samuel G.	409 Hq Co
Jones	Richard S.	411 Co L
Kane	Thomas G.	411 Co C
Kraemer	Victor A.	411 Co E
Laib	Rev. Doyne	103 Rec
Levenson	Daniel J.	411 Co B
Lomerson	Ralph J.	409 Co B
MaLossi	Leo I.	411 Co G
Menuey	Raymond J.	409 Hq Co 3Bn
Neff	Robert R.	409 Co B
Nelson	Sherman O.	410 Co F
Nichols	Kenneth A.	411 AT Co
Nilsen	Warren L.	411 Co F
Schwenk	Gervase	410 Co C
Sonett	Charles P.	410 Co K
Sulek	Ralph A.	411 Co L
Swearingen	Marion B.	328 Med Co B
Wahl	George C.	411 Co L
Walsh	Gerald A	410 Co I
Wilson	Gordon A.	410 Co F
Wuensche	John A.	411 Co A

SPECIAL TRIBUTE

A SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO FLOYD CLINT NOBLES, JR., Marble Falls, Texas

Clint passed away October 26, 2011 after a battle with cancer. He was an active member and long time supporter of the 103d Infantry Division World War II Association.

His dedication to the Association was steeped in the love of his country and in honor of his uncle, past Association President Mel Wright. Clint had an active part in the development and construction of the Gainesville Welcome Station Monument honoring the fallen veterans of the 103d Infantry Division and provided extensive support to the Monument Board of Directors. Clint was a proud American whose untiring efforts helped preserve the legacy of all those who answered THE CALL TO DUTY.

DISTINGUISHED COMRADE BG HAROLD F. PACHA PASSED AWAY 16 NOV., 2011



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



l/to/r: Carolyn Heman & Louis Lipoglav (H/411), Dennis O'Rourke (HqCo1Bn/409) & dau. Peggy O'Rourke, Cynthia Gilbert & father Julian A. Lerner (A/410), Estelle & Harry Noxon (B/409 & former POW), James E. White (B/409), 103d Association's most recent past president.



Standing: Robert Rathgeber (G/411), Francine Vallex & Robert French, (son of Edward French-HqCo/411); seated: David & Jane Hall and father Robert Hahn (HqCo/410), Terry R. Zaud, Joni & Terry G. Zaud, son of Robert E. Zaud (HqCo/328M), Maryel Locke - widow of Edward French.



After WW II Victory Show, l/r: Chan & Ammie Rogers (G/409), John Girard & Victoria Reed-singers, Beth Tuxhorn, Jimmy Murphy-MC, Thelma Wright, Zack & Noreen Zigler-103d Historians, Kathy DeRouen & Jimi Burchell-singers, Marlene & William Krul (son of William KIA-A/409)



l/to/r: Gloria McLeod, our Sec/Treas., B/G Harold F.Pacha (G/411), Peggy Salathe, Chan Rogers (G/409), Judge Tom Stagg (E/411), Brian Salathe, son of Leonard J. Salathe (HqCo/410), Tom Pacha, Sharon Costanza, daughter of L.J. Salathe, Claire & Earle L. Parker (HqCo/410 & buddy of L.J. Salathe)



l/to/r: Torrence L.(TL) Riggs (L/411) & son, Carrol Riggs; Beth Tuxhorn (Mel Wright's niece), Thelma Wright, Steve Tuxhorn, Mel Wright (G/411), past 103d Assoc.Pres., Kathy & Clint Nobles - nephew of Mel Wright. Clint Nobles passed away Oct 26, 2011. (Reference Page 5 herein.)



Standing: Tom & Cindi Passmore (son of vet Jerry H/411), Steve & Mike Tobin (sons of vet "Pepper" A/410), Bea Passmore-husband vet Jerry; seated: Robert Briggs (L/410) & niece Julia Martin, Rick & Tina Fischer, son of Fred D. Fischer (A/410)



Brian Salathe, son of L.J. Salathe (HqCo/410) and volunteer at WW II National Museum, leads several 103d Association members on tour, including Thelma Wright, Harold & Tom Pacha.



l/to/r: Patricia Modrzejewski, Patricia & Larry Wayne (new VP & Webmaster), Walter Modrzejewski (F/411), Frank Dukes (A/410), Jerry & Diane Holland, dau. of Dennis Zaboth-KIA(G/411), Marleen & William Krul, son of William Krul - KIA (A/409), Louise Dukes



Standing: Hank Klages (A/410), Robert "Pepper" Tobin (A/410), R. Bruce Hughes (HqCo/409), Robert Elsner (HqCo/409); seated: Lina Klages w/dau. Amy Ulrich, Eleanor (Hughes) Sergi, Mareen Hughes, Barbara Elsner



103d Association members saluting @ opening of Annual Business Meeting in hotel Hospitality Room July 16, 2011.



Natchez Dinner Cruise (middle l/r): Noreen, Mike & Tom Swope - son of Clarence Swope (B/409) Tom does radio talk shows hosting veterans as tribute to his father.



Carroll C. Cook, Sr family: l/r/ daughter Ginny Hickson, friend Shirley Rabke, granddaughter Caroline Hickson, son Ned Cook, daughter Elizabeth McMillian, Carroll C. Cook, Sr (l/410)



l/r: B/G Harold Pachta & son Tom Pachta. After commissioning, Harold served during training in 1st Bn 411 and on going overseas to combat, he was transferred to division G-4 and advanced to major after the war served in NC, and after 34 years service retired as B/G in 1975.



Zack Sigler's 103d Hospitality Room "WW II Library" (l/r: Steve Tobin, Amy Ulrich & father Hank Klages (A/410), Robert "Pepper" Tobin (A/410), Lina Klages



Audrey "Bear" Walters" (l/410) brother James, wife Diane, and daughter Pamela Walters-McDonald



Estelle & Harry Nixon (B/409) at the New Orleans Veterans Museum. Estelle is a POW. Reference to NCTSP #27, Pg 9.



103d ID WWII Association members viewing movie at The National WW II Museum in New Orleans July 15, 2011.



l/r: 103d Officers: B/D Robert Quinn (l/410), Past President Jim White (B/409), President Chan Rogers (G/409), Sec/Treasurer Gloria McLeod (Harry McLeod-G/411), Vice President & Webmaster Larry Wayne (V.Dudenbostel-D/409), Ass't Vice President Bob French (Edward French-HqCo/411)

The 848th Man Killed in Action (KIA)



Steve Ropa, of Chicago, was seeking information about his uncle, Steve B. Kopinski. Mr. Ropa had no clue as to the unit with which his uncle Steve had served. However, information from the National Archives Record Administration reported that Private Steve B. Kopinski was KIA serving with the 103d Infantry Division.

At the same time Steve Ropa sent his message, Zack Sigler was putting together Morning Report information for Alexander J. Sears, who had joined Company I, 411th Infantry Regiment, on November 20, 1944 and was wounded in December, 1944. Zack had researched the

Company I Morning Reports and he mailed a copy to Mr. Sears and sent the Webmaster a copy. When Larry Wayne, 103d Webmaster, opened the file, the name Steve B. Kopinski was among others with Mr. Sears who had joined Company I, 411th Infantry Regiment on November 20, 1944.

Since Steve Ropa had indicated his uncle, Steve Kopinski, was apparently KIA in December, 1944, Wayne reviewed the December, 1944 Morning Report for I/411th. In doing so, he found the details of Mr. Sears having been WIA, and also noticed that Steve B. Kopinski was listed on a December 3, 1944 Morning Report entry as MIA (missing-in-action). (It is standard practice to report individuals as MIA when the reason for absence is unknown or death not confirmed) Larry Wayne contacted Zack Sigler and asked if he could further research to determine Kopinski's status possibly changing months later after the body was found or hospitalization reported.

Upon a thorough search, a March 14, 1945 Morning Report entry had a notation that Private Steve B. Kopinski's status was changed from MIA to KIA on December 3, 1944.

PVT Kopinski landed on Normandy

June 19, 1944 with the 315th Infantry Regiment. Later, in action on July 8, he suffered an enemy machine gun wound in the knee, and was evacuated to an Army hospital in England. He remained there until late August, 1944 when he was transferred to a Replacement Depot for reassignment to duty.

Predominately, wounded soldiers were sent back to the unit in which they were serving when wounded, but for some reason, PVT Kopinski was not reassigned to the 315th Infantry Regiment, but instead, remained in the replacement depot an unusual length of time until November 20, 1944, when he was assigned to Co. I, 411th Infantry Regiment, 103d ID and was Killed in Action less than two weeks later (12/3). A review of the Casualty Reports revealed that PVT Kopinski's KIA status was not verified until mid-March, possibly when the ground action was such to retake the site of his death and temporary burial in enemy held territory. PVT Kopinski will be honored and his name added to the 103d Monument at Gainesville, TX Memorial Day, 2012 as the 848th member of the 103d Infantry Division Killed in Action (KIA) in WW II. Actual date & time of ceremony to be announced later in this Newsletter (#31) in April 2012.

African-American 761st Tank Bn at the 1993 Cactus Reunion

The 761st Tank Battalion was the first African American armored unit to see combat in World War II. With its assignment to the 103d Division on March 12, 1945, each of the three infantry regiments had attached African American tank and tank destroyer companies for the final breakthrough of the Siegfried Line into Germany. Part of "Task Force Rhine," a fast-moving armored column, with G Co. 409th infantrymen riding on lead tanks, drove 15 miles deep behind German lines. "We fought a day and a night and a day to get to our objective [Klingenmünster, in Rhineland-Palatinate, western Germany]," Bob Leslie of G Company remembered.

"So, many people who belittled the Black soldier had their eyes opened," Leslie said. "Some of the men became very good friends of these Black tankers. In fact, we invited members of the 761st Tank Battalion to come to the reunion we had in Schaumburg (NW Chicago suburb) in 1994. We appreciated them and gave them our thanks."

At the reunion, Leslie and a 761st truck driver struck up a conversation and discovered how their paths perilously crossed during Task Force Rhine's strike deep into German rear positions:

If you were a trucker who belonged to a tank battalion, your job was to get ammunition and gasoline to the tanks. On this particular action, we had at

least three trucks that carried nothing but gasoline—five-gallon cans of gasoline on the back of them and that's a very flammable proposition if you get hit with tracers or artillery or anything like that.

When they relieved the jeep driver and the machine gunners who were on the jeep, we went back and rode the gasoline trucks. We were stopped because of a burning ammunition dump. Some of the German infantry could get back close to the road without our infantry being able to see them because it was night. I am off the truck. One German soldier came out of a cut in the road and he had a Panzerfaust. He wasn't twenty-five feet from one truck that had gasoline on it.

At that particular time, my job was to get prisoners from the infantry and tankers who were collecting them. There was no other place to put them than on the gasoline and ammunition trucks. There were about a dozen prisoners up on the gasoline truck and they saw the guy. Even though it was dark, the flames were flickering enough so you could see him. He's there with a Panzerfaust aimed at the truck, and I'm there with my M1 aimed at him. I had the drop on him, but if I fired, he would fire the Panzerfaust.

We looked at one another. It was probably no more than ten or fifteen seconds, but it seemed like a lifetime and I'm sure he was going to shoot. And all those German prisoners up on the truck were yelling at him, "Nicht schiessen, nicht schiessen!" They didn't want to get blown up. I was motioning to him to throw the Panzerfaust away. Finally, he stuck the safety pin back into the Panzerfaust, threw it over his head, put his hands on his head, and climbed up on the truck.

At the reunion, I said to the truck driver I was talking to, "Maybe you don't know this, but I'll tell you a story." He said, "I don't know if I was driving that truck or not." I said, "I remember there were some sayings painted on the front of the truck. You guys in the 761st Tank Battalion, you painted some crazy names on the sides of your tanks and the fronts of your trucks." I continued, "This one said 'Dear God, how long?'" He said, "That was my truck!"



761st Tank Bn veterans at 103d ID WWII Association 1993 Reunion in Schaumburg, IL with 103d I/r Roger Craddock (G/409), Richard E. Pearson (F/410) and Harold Branton (G/409). (Bob Leslie is over Pearson's right shoulder)

Jerry O. Passmore*—General Hafner's Wartime Photographer

After completing basic training, I was sent to the 103d Infantry Division at Camp Howze, near Gainesville, TX. I was assigned to a rifle company—Co I, 411th Inf, one of three regiments in the 103d ID. I was one of the bigger men in the company, so I had been assigned to carry a BAR [Browning automatic rifle]. I put in a request for a transfer to Signal Company because they did photography and that was my interest. Nothing ever came of that. I did have a camera, but it got lost in combat. I would have had some good pictures; but it was one of those things. Sometimes things happen so fast—sometimes you're moving so fast and so seriously to just save your own life.

I had been in Camp Howze maybe ten days. We had just come in from the field; it was summertime, and we were hot, sweaty. We were pulling off our dirty fatigues and boots to take a shower. I was just pulling off my boots when an orderly came running in and said, "I'm looking for Jerry Passmore. Is he in here?" I said I was. He said, "Well, you're wanted at division headquarters."

Some of the men started to tease me—saying "What have you done?" I said, "I don't know."

They said, "You must have done something to be called up to division." I continued to take my boots off.

The orderly came running back in and said, "Are you still here?" I said, "Yeah, I'm going to change my clothes."

The orderly said, "No, they want you there now." I said, "Dirty fatigues?" He said, "Yes, just as you are."

So, I put my boots back on and headed out for division headquarters.

A captain met me at the door and said, "Can I help you, soldier?" I said, "Well, sir, I don't know. I just was told to

report to division headquarters." He said, "Well, did they tell you who to report to?"

I said, "No, sir, they did not. My only orders were to report to division headquarters."

He said, "Well, you wait right here and I'll check around to see who called you up." He started making the rounds.

General Hafner's office when you walked in the front door was at the other end. His desk was sitting so that he could

look right out at the front door and see everybody who walked in there. He had an officer in with him, so the captain passed him right by. He came back and said, "I can't find anybody. Wait a minute and I'm sure General Hafner will know."

The officer in General Hafner's office left and the captain went in and asked him. He was standing right there in the doorway, so I could hear him say, "Sir, did anyone here at division headquarters ask for Jerry Passmore?"

The general stood up and said, "Yes, I called for him." So, the officer motioned for me to go in. He sat down at his desk and I stood there at attention. About that time, the phone rang and he answered it. I heard him say, "I've got someone here I want to talk to. So, I'll get back to you." I was still standing there at attention. Of course, in basic training, they impress upon you that you will never encounter a general. The only officers you will have contact with are a first lieutenant or second lieutenant, a captain occasionally, a major maybe. But you'll never have any contact with anyone higher than that. Of course, in basic training, they always impressed on you how to address any officer. The main thing is you stand at attention until they tell you, "At ease." So, I was standing there and he was going through some papers—I guess he heard my knees knocking and I was getting more nervous by the second.

Finally, he looked up and said, "At ease." He said, "There's no sense in your standing there. In fact, I want to talk with you. There's a chair over there. Pull the chair over here." So, I pulled the chair over close to his desk. Then he started telling me what he had in mind. He wanted to create a booklet about the 103d Infantry Division in its final phase of training at Camp Howze before going overseas—called *Cactus Caravan*.

He said, "I understand that you have done quite a bit of photography." I said, "Yes, sir, I have."

He said, "Do you have a camera?" I said, "Yes, sir, I have."

He then asked me a lot of questions—about where I lived, what I had done in school, and so forth. He just chatted on and on. And, of course, the more he talked, the more relaxed I got. He talked to you just

like he had known you all your life. That was one man I don't know how anyone could ever dislike. He was the most down-to-earth officer and, yet, he was a two star general—someone I never expected to meet. He commanded 15,000 men and there I was talking with him. I was a buck private just days out of basic training and hardly had time to get acquainted with the army. The more I thought about it, the more relaxed I got with him.

He explained what he wanted to do with *Cactus Caravan*. He wanted to get photos of all the activities—from the artillery to the engineers, everything that went on in training the 103d Division at Camp Howze.

I said, "I don't know how I'm going to do it."

He said, "Well, I'm going to put you on detached service and you will report to division headquarters. I'll notify your company commander that you're in my command now. I'll instruct you on what we want you to do from day to day, what we need and so forth." That's what he did. The men who worked on the photography end were involved in different aspects of the project. I would report in, and General Hafner would say, "We have some engineering projects going on. We want to cover this, this, and this in the engineering projects." That's what I did. I would figure out how I could cover what he wanted to be covered in the engineering project. That's the way everything went.

We were finally finishing it up just about the time we got orders we were shipping out. He told me, "You have to report back to your company now." One of the last things he told me in the meetings when I went in to sit with him, "When this thing is over"—I don't recall him ever saying "when the war was over"—"I want you to look me up." That was the one thing he told me that I didn't do. I've often wondered whether that was a smart move or a dumb move.

I have the copy of *Cactus Caravan* he gave me. I'm listed on the credit page in the back. I have nothing but praise for that man, and anybody who has ever had any contact with him would tell you the same thing—that he was very easy to understand; he didn't mince words. What he wanted

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done, he was straightforward—if you had any questions, that was fine. He would sit down and talk with you just like he'd known you all your life.

He pretty much handled the whole development of *Cactus Caravan*. He controlled it. He would tell you exactly what to do and was very understanding. I don't think I ever met a nicer man. He was the commanding general, who I never expected to meet. I still wonder, of all men who came to Camp Howze, how was I

picked to do photography for the *Cactus Caravan*? In all my conversations with General Hafner, I never asked him how he got my name. I'll never know how that happened.

***Jerry O. Passmore** is your Association's very hard working and highly competent photographer who has captured all our members at the 103d reunions for the past 8 years. However, both he and all of our members know very well that without

the help and very crucial assistance of his spouse, Bea, he could not have performed in such a highly professional manner. We heartily thank them BOTH! Chan Rogers

Available!

Interviews and accounts by and about 103d Infantry Division veterans

Remembering / Extra! Extra! / A Funny Thing Happened (July 2011—New Orleans, LA)

The Three Sisters: Selestat, Sessenheim, Schillersdorf (July 2010—San Antonio, TX)

Cactus Soldiers Remember: Interviews—Narratives (July 2009—Nashville, TN)

These three booklets of interviews and accounts by and about 103d Infantry Division veterans are from the *103d Infantry Division of WWII Album of Remembrance*, compiled by Luke Martin, 103d Association Historian. They are available free of charge.

To get copies, contact Bob French by phone (508.207.7681), e-mail (rfrench@northstarlc.org), or mail (83 Durfee Street, New Bedford, MA 02740).

PLEASE PAY YOUR 103d ASSOCIATION DUES

If you haven't paid your 2011 dues please pay your 2011 & 2012 dues now! \$25/year

Those members who are able PLEASE, consider a donation to the Association's efforts to preserve and project our legacy and accomplishments as citizen soldiers.

- NOTICE -

The 103d Association plans a memorial service in Gainesville, TX on Memorial Day of 2012 to recognize the 848th veteran KIA.

Details will be provided in a future newsletter.

103d ID WW II Veterans Poolside at Chateau LeMoyne New Orleans 2011 Reunion



From l to r Standing: Jessie Cox I/410, Edward Paige L/410, Louis Lipoglav H/411, Baxter Fite, Jr C/328M, Walter Modrzejewski F/411, Chan Rogers G/409, John Anania 103Sig, Jerry Passmore I/411, James White B/409, Robert Rathgeber G/411, Charles Fitzpatrick H/410, Hank Klages A/410, Robert Tobin A/410, Jessie Neill A/382F; Seated: Bear Walters I/410, James Mulligan L/410, Bruce Hughes HqCo/409, Mel Wright G/411, Dennis O'Rourke 1BnHq/409, Robert Briggs L/410, Harry Nixon B/409, Robert Quinn I/410, Herbert Morgan D/409, Harold Pacha G/411, Tom Miller F/409, & Who Knows this Vet?
Flag Bearer@left: William Krul, son of KIA William Krul(A/409), & @right Larry Wayne, nephew of Vaal Dudenbostel(D/409)

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