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The Octofoil, January/February 2005

Ninth Infantry Division Association

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THE OCTOFOIL

224 North Grove Street, Valley Stream, N.Y. 11580

THE NINTH INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION Volume LX Number 1

Jan.- Feb., 2005

Ninth Recon

*John Bonkowski
19241 Angela Court
Roseville, MI 48066*

Our Octofoil came on January 24th and from what we have read it should have been here by the 15th. That is a lot better than in the past so our President Bill Robey and Editor, Joe Killen's effort to resolve the problem is working.

The Taps Sounded column always brings sadness especially when we see the names of those whom we knew. This time it was Paul D. Clark (D Co. 60th). He and his wife Lorraine were very active in the Illinois & Michigan Chapters' Outstate Meetings in Angola, IN during the early years. They also attended many National Reunions when health allowed. Those memories will always remain.

On December 8, the Michigan Chapter enjoyed a well-attended Christmas Party at the Bavarian Inn in Frankenmuth, MI. This is as close as you can get to the real Bavaria that we left behind. Among those present were Harry & Blondina Sager from Fostoria, Ohio. She fell again at home since that mishap at the last Reunion but fortunately there were no fractures this time. Harry underwent by-pass surgery and has fully recovered. It was nice to have them with us on that happy occasion.

Also present were George & Simonne Bartley (B Co. 60th) from Roscommon, MI. It had been quite some time since we've seen them and it was good to have them join us. However, it was sad to hear that they lost a daughter a few years ago.

A Christmas card from Gordon Anderson (9th Recon) had a note with a special request. We were pleased to be able to send him a copy of a page from the January '46 issue of the Ninth Division News. It covered the Ninth Recon's special mission patrolling the Bavarian Alps during the month of December 1945. It included a fine picture of Gordon operating his radio in one of the Weasels that we used for that period.

That mission required special equipment to negotiate the deep snow in the whole area. The Recon was assigned six Weasels that would go over any snow with its tracks and hardly leave a depression. Each one would accommodate four passengers with comfort. The canvas top and side curtains were good protection against the elements. One of the purposes of the patrol was to look for possible caches of enemy weapons and ammunition. Many of the old mountaineers were amazed to see a motorized vehicle approach their isolated chalets high in the Alps. The view from that vantage point was "out of this world."

During that mission, some of us were able to attend the midnight Christmas Mass in Berchtesgaden. We will never forget the choir singing "Silent Night." This was our last Christmas away from home. How could we ever forget that?

It was during that memorable month that a tragic collision took place on the Autobahn which cost General George Patton his life about a week later. Only a little over four months before that fatal event, the Ninth Recon served as Honor Guard with our M-8's at the Manching Airport near Augsburg, Germany for General Patton as he flew in during the Ninth Infantry Division's Fifth Anniversary celebration. I have a reminder as I look out our condo window at that elementary school across the field that was named after him. That is also our voting place.

This has been a cold winter all around. Not only with the subfreezing chills from the Arctic, but also all that snow that came with it. We recently enjoyed a warming chat with the Shimkoski's who seemed to have more snow in Worcester than we have. However, they live on the third floor, how lucky can you get? (Now that was a real big snow job.)

It had been a while since we heard from our Recon buddy Nick Capobianco, so we gave him a call. He's having his health problems and is waiting for the warm weather to return which may help him feel better. He enjoys his Octofoil and is pleased when it comes. Nick was our Mail Clerk and he "made our day" many times when it meant so much. When we came back he kept the "Gang" together with an occasional newsletter. He also arranged a few get-togethers that were really enjoyed by everyone who was able to come. We wish "Cappy" as we called him and Dottie our very best, always.

We're enclosing a little donation in Memory of Paul D. Clark (D Co. 60th) and all of our Recon Buddies that went before us. Our appreciation to the Editor, Joe Killen for the great job that he is doing and God's Blessings to everyone in our wonderful Association.

Respectfully,
John Bonkowski

President's Message

by Bill Robey

Again it is time for more information on the National Reunion in September 2005. This explanation of the refund policy repeats the explanation that was in previous information about the reunion.

Refunds will be made on a case by case basis, but basically it will be as follows: Refunds will be made in full except in cases where we have had to make non-refundable deposits to the hotel or other suppliers. In those cases, a deduction from the refund will be made in the amount of the apportioned non-refundable deposits. Every effort will be made to make refunds in the largest amount possible under the above conditions. The refunds will be made at the direction of the Reunion Committee and all decisions will be final.

There have been several questions raised about individual costs for the events of our reunion, and I will try to set some minds at ease by the following explanations.

There are certain costs that have to be split up among all those attending, such as costs for meeting rooms, extra costs for office supplies, postage, audio equipment, microphones, lap top computers, etc., these are listed as incidental expenses and may be less than estimated. If there are any reductions, such savings will be donated to the National Association by the Reunion Committee.

As an example, the costs for double accommodations are Room Rates, Friday Reception and Beer Party; Saturday, Sunday and Monday Breakfasts; Bus Transportation to and from the Memorial Service; Saturday Night Entertainment in the Hotel Theater; Sunday night Banquet with Open Bar Reception with hors d'oeuvres. In addition, there are the extras mentioned above.

This breaks down into the following:

Three Nights Hotel per room	\$330.00
Following are per person costs:	
Welcome & Beer Party	\$28.00
Breakfasts (3) \$15 each	\$45.00
Bus Transportation	\$15.00
Saturday Night Entertainment	\$40.00
Banquet & Reception	\$65.00
(including Open Bar & Snacks and wine at dinner)	
Incidental Expenses	\$64.00
Total per person	\$257.00

All of the above are per person costs included in the costs listed on the Reservation Form in the Octofoil.

Additional nights hotel cost \$110.00

The above prices also include any gratuities.

If there are any of you who are planning on attending the reunion but not staying at the hotel, please contact me so that I can give you the exact amount you should send to cover the events you wish to attend. Some events, such as the Business Meeting, and Board of Governors meetings are free and open to any member who wants to attend them.

The only additional costs would be parking in the hotel underground garage and the cost for the group photo to be taken at the Memorial Service. Parking costs right now are \$14.00 per day, but we are trying to negotiate a lower rate if we can work it out with the hotel. The group photo will be a color photo approximately 12 x 22 inches in size and the cost will be \$25.00 per copy. These photos will be available on Sunday night at the banquet.

The Saturday night entertainment has now been finalized and the show will be performed by a local group known as "The Capitol Steps," a very talented and well known group made up of employees on Capitol Hill. They bill themselves as the "only group funnier than the United States Congress." They perform all over the country for all kinds of organizations and are well thought of in the Washington DC area. We are extremely lucky to be able to have them at our reunion.

I have been receiving a lot of phone calls about the reunion and I have been keeping a running count on those who say "I'll see you at the reunion in September." So far, I have about 100 on the list and more being added each day. If they all make reservations and show up at the reunion, then this will be one of

(Continued on Page 3)

TIP OF THE HAT

We thank the following members and friends for remembering the Memorial Fund and our buddies who have answered their last Roll Call.

Dale E. Smith for a tribute remembrance of the 2nd Bn., 39th Inf. medics; Salvatore Trapani, Phillip Cancellate, Frank Buzanoski, Larry Goodwin and Leo Charland.

Mrs. Helen J. Mizell in memory of her loving husband, Willie Warren Mizell of the 47th's 2nd Bn. Hdq. Co.

Mrs. Lisa Froug-Hirano in memory of her uncle, Capt. Edward Weiss, (DOW 9/21/44) of Co. B, 60th Inf.

Wilfred M. Thornton in memory of all the good buddies who served in Co. M - 60th Inf.

Charles Becker in memory of Frank Aiello, Co. M - 39th Inf., KIA at Kasserine Pass.

Ernest G. Micka in memory of Peter P. Thomas of Co. B - 15th Engineers.

John J. Wessmiller in memory of Hal Fose and David Bingner, both KIA in Normandy while with Division Headquarters.

George H. Brown in memory of Alice Caswell, widow of Norman L. Caswell, 1985 Pres.

John B. Knight in memory of LTC William H. "Bill" Horan of Co. M, 47th Inf.

Andrew H. Crawford in memory of the buddies from the 47th Regt. Hdq. Co.

"Larry" McLaughlin in memory of John H. Miller, Jr. of Co. A - 47th Inf.

Bill Bongiorno in memory of all of my dearly departed friends.

Lorraine A. Johanson in loving memory of her father, Ralph B. DeForest of Hdq. Co., 1st Bn., 47th Inf.

Mrs. Edith D. Grossman in memory of her loving husband, George H. Grossman of Service Co. - 60th inf.

William J. Rybka in memory of George A. Ruetschi of Hdq. Btry, 84th F. A. Bn.

Mrs. Virginia S. Ruetschi in loving memory of her husband, George A. Ruetschi.

The Walter E. Ricker Family in memory of George A. Ruetschi, Newton Fields and Frank W. Haines, all of the 84th Field Artillery.

Lawrence P. Vinci in memory of Sloan and Berand Albers of Co. B - 47th Inf.

James E. Leopold remembering the men of "my old gang" from the 2nd Bn. - 47th Inf.

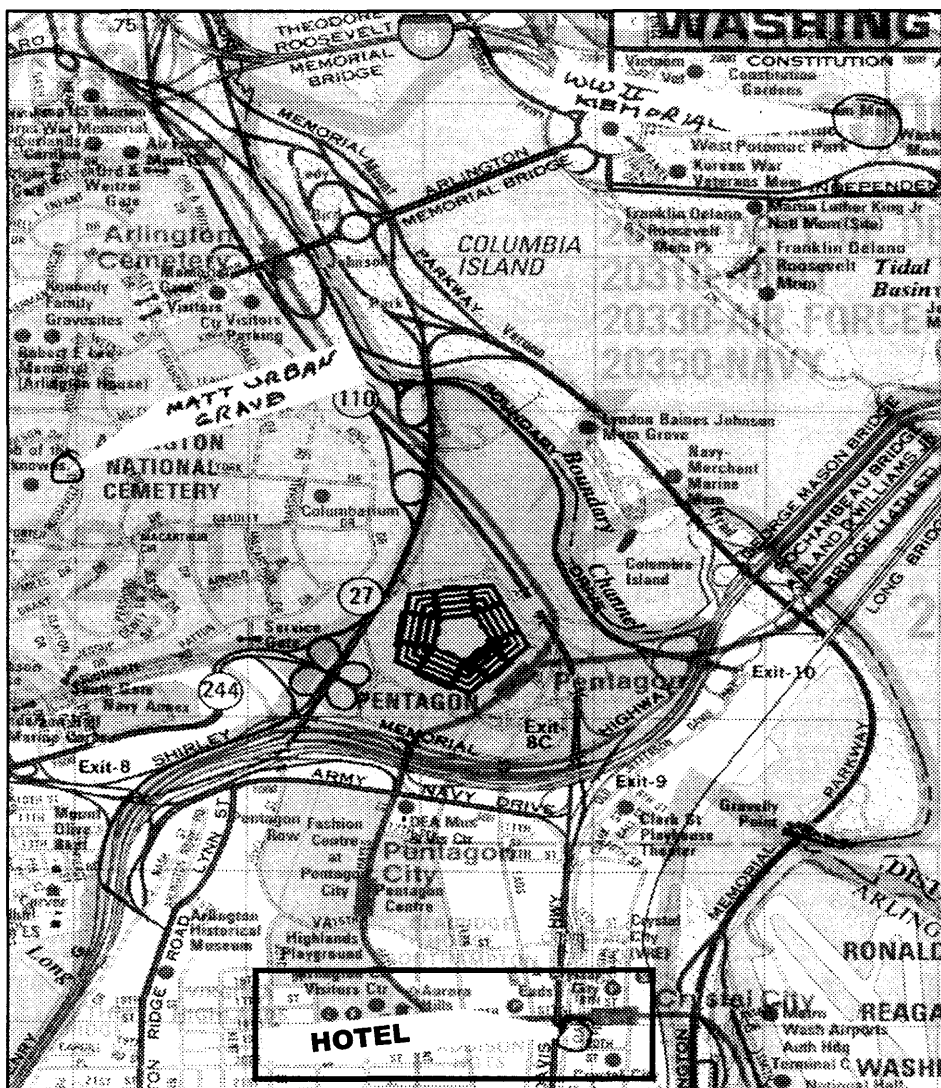
Joe Killacky in memory of Evan "Red" Thompson and the men of Co. K - 47th Inf.

Adolph Wadalavage in memory of Bill Bateman of the 9th Military Police Platoon.

Alex T. Forrest in memory of his beloved wife of 56 years, Olive E. Forrest.

George H. Brown in memory of Paul D. Clark of Co. D - 60th Inf.

John Bonkowski in memory of Paul D. Clark of Co. D - 60th Inf. and all of our Recon Buddies that went before us.



LADIES CORNER

Hello Ladies,

Well, I finally got an answer from the Crystal City Hotel about a luncheon after our meeting. It's a good thing I was sitting down when Tiffany Cox's assistant told me \$30 for a cup of soup and half of a sandwich plus coffee or tea.

Then she said to call and speak to the manager of the restaurant in the hotel. There, she thought, the price would be around \$15 each for the same fare. She told me there was a back section where we could probably hold our meeting and have the lunch.

Sooo, Bill Robey and Jackie Armstrong Thompson are meeting at the Marriott February 24th to see how arrangements are progressing for the men and she will check out the other possibilities in the area, or see if she can get a lower price for us. I feel \$15 is an awful lot for so little.

Like Jackie said, "They know they have you over a barrel" if there is nothing close by. She also said, "Order in pizza", but I'm sure that would not be allowed by the hotel. I will have a final answer after February 24th.

We also received dues from Mrs. Lois Brewer from Beaver Creek, Ohio. A new member. Her husband is Burleigh Brewer of Company K and Cannon Company, 39th Infantry.

I'm sorry I don't have better news to pass on to you, but I won't give up. Keep looking around or making a gift for our raffle table. Good health to all and hope you can attend the 60th reunion in Washington, DC.

Sincerely,

Jean Geary, Ladies Auxiliary President

1305 East Livingston Street

Allentown, PA 18109-1531

Phone: (610) 432 - 1557

POTSHOTS and OTHER OBSERVATIONS from the DUGOUT.

We haven't received any messages lately from the "Sons and Daughters of the NINTH", so I will use this space to inform our readers of our progress regarding our delivery problems. The First-Class mailing seems to be the way to go. The papers that do not get delivered for whatever reason are returned to this office, and we can adjust our lists to prevent a recurrence of the same thing happening on the next batch of deliveries.

Formerly, sending by standard rate mail, all of the un-deliverable copies were probably chucked into a corner in the local Post Offices to be destroyed at their leisure. When we were not made aware of who was deceased, or who had relocated without telling us of their new locations, we were paying the printer to print, and the Post Office to ship and deliver, all in good faith, copies that would not reach the hands of our members. The Good Lord only knows how many copies of how many issues have gone astray in that manner, and for how long. That turned out to be an expensive proposition that we cannot afford.

By informing us of your relocations we can deliver the paper right into your hands; so if you move across town or across the country, please, let us know where you were and where you going to. Next on the agenda is trying to fix the delivery delays. Thank You.

Joe Killen, Editor

President's Message

(Continued from Page 1)

the biggest reunions we have ever had.

The deadline for deposits and reservations is April 1, 2005. Please send your reservation form and deposit right away so we can begin to work on the guarantees we need to give for the various events. Final payment must be made by August 1, 2005 and there will be no exceptions to this. If your final payment is not received by August 1, then your deposit will be refunded and your name removed from the reservation list.

There will be a baseball cap with the Division Patch and 9th Infantry Division WW II given to each member who registers. There will be extra caps on sale for those who desire them. The cost for the extras will be \$10.00 per cap. Some of our members said they want to buy extra caps to take back home to chapter members who could not come to the reunion.

There will be a meeting of the Reunion Committee at the hotel on Feb. 24, and we will report on that meeting in the next Octofoil.

See you in September

Bill. Robey, 15th Engineers

President

**The Deadline for the
submission of copy for the next issue
is April 20th**

TAPS SOUNDED

*The muffled drum's sad roll has beat the soldier's last tattoo;
No more on life's parade shall meet that brave and fallen few.
On Fame's eternal camping-ground their silent tents are spread,
And Glory guards, with solemn round, the bivouac of the dead.*

TAPS SOUNDED

- | | |
|--|--|
| Peter P. Thomas
Co. B - 15th Engrs. | John H. Miller, Jr.
Co. A - 47th Inf. |
| James M. Egan
9th Recon Troop | Ralph B. DeForest
1st Bn. Hq. Co. - 47th Inf. |
| George A. Ruetschi
Hq. Btry. - 84th F. A. Bn. | George H. Grossman
Service Co. - 60th Inf. |
| William (Bill) Bateman
9th Military Police Platoon | Edward Marlin Mellinger
39th Inf. Medical Detachment |
| Mrs. Peter Dalessandro, widow of
Peter J. Dalessandro,
Co. E - 39th Inf., CMH winner | Mrs. Olive E. Forrest, wife of
Alex T. Forrest,
Co. A & Bn. Hq. - 15th Engrs |

1st Bn. Hq. Co. - 47th Inf.
Ralph B. DeForest
c/o Mrs. Lorraine A. Johanson

I received my father's copy of the OCTOFOIL today. I wish he were still here for me to read it to him. He passed on last week and is now in a better place. Please accept the enclosed donation in his memory. Also, a copy of his obituary is enclosed. I miss him so much.
Lorraine A. Johanson

Ralph B. DeForest

Ralph B. DeForest was born on March 6, 1919 in Stamford, CT. and passed away on January 26, 2005 in Lawrenceville, GA at the age of 85. A descendent of the early settlers of Stamford and Long Ridge, Ralph attended the one room school house on Old Long Ridge Road, where the Fire Station now stands. He graduated from Stamford High School in 1938. He was a Life member of the Long Ridge Fire Company where he served as Lieutenant for one year.

From June 25, 1941 to June 25, 1945, exactly four years to the day, Ralph served his country as a member of the 47th Infantry Regiment, 9th Infantry Division. After his basic training at Fort Bragg, NC. , he was assigned to the Ammunition and Pioneer Platoon of the 1st Battalion Headquarters Company. He started to keep a diary the day after the Battalion left Fort Bragg to board the transports that would carry them to North Africa.

He invaded Africa via Blue Beach, Safi. Later he saw action at Kasserine Pass, El Guettar and Bizerte. The diary recorded the action in Sicily too, before they departed for England for 6 months of intensive training. He landed on Utah Beach on June 10, 1944. After helping to cut the Cotentin peninsula, he participated in the liberation of the port city of Cherbourg. Turning 180 degrees almost without rest, they attack in the direction of St. Lo, and kept going out of Normandy, through France and Belgium, into the forests of the German border. During the Battle of the Bulge, Ralph was occupying a building in Monschau, Germany holding the shoulder of the breakthrough. Later, Ralph moved into Germany and crossed the Rhine River with the Regiment over the Ludendorff Bridge near Remagen. A little more than three weeks over the bridge, he was wounded on Easter Sunday, April 1945 and the war ended during his return trip to his unit.

He had amassed 123 points and was honorably discharged with the rank of Sgt. The diary was closed on the day of discharge, June 25, 1945 and can now be seen in the Library of Congress, Veterans History Project in the American Folk-Life Center in Washington, DC. He received the following decorations: Combat Infantryman Badge, Silver Star Medal, Purple Heart Medal, Good Conduct Medal, American Defense Medal, Europe-Africa- Middle East campaign Medal with eight battle stars, and the Normandy Liberation Medal presented by the French government.

After serving in WWII, he became a builder and re-modeler. He had a gift for working with wood and it became his hobby to craft fine cabinets and grandfather clocks.

Hq. Co. - 47th Inf.
Andrew H. Crawford

Still hanging in there at 88. I have a wonderful place to stay; excellent food and very warm. Excellent care and a wonderful lady. I enjoy every minute of it. I receive letters from Tom Cobb and Ralph DeForest. Doing a wonderful job.

Andrew Crawford
(Note: Andrew's note was postmarked the day before Ralph passed away. Just another example of how fragile our existence has become.)

Service Co. - 60th Inf.
George H. Grossman

Enclosed is a check in memory of my husband George H. Grossman who passed away on October 26, 2004. George suffered a stroke in July 1995 and in December 2001 fractured his hip as a result of a fall.

He was always interested in anything connected with the 9th Division. Due to his disability our travels were curtailed. The last reunion that we attended was in San Antonio.

George with the help of a handful of ex - GI's was instrumental in forming the New York Chapter. Unfortunately, many have moved on.

The OCTOFOIL provides a wonderful service. I know it was the highlight of his day.

Sincerely,
Edith D. Grossman

Hq. Btry. - 84th F. A. Bn.
Walter E. Ricker

It was with such great sorrow that my Dad, Walter E. Ricker, my sisters and I learned of the death in December of 2004 of our beloved friend, George Ruetschi, also of the 84th Field Artillery.

Please find enclosed a gift in memory of George as well as for Newton Fields and Frank W. Haines - all of whom were our heroes. We'd like this memorial gift to be used in publishing The OCTOFOIL. It has kept us connected with each other and for that we are also very grateful. It gives us a vital connecting link.

Though there are fewer each year of the 9th Infantry heroes, it is a gift to be part of the reunions. Hopefully, we will see you in September in Washington, D.C. for the 60th Annual Reunion.

Our kindest regards. On behalf of my Dad and my sisters, Mary Ann Monk and Linda Kennedy, we appreciate and honor all of you in the 9th Infantry.

Sincerely,
Rev. Jeannie Higgins

Headquarters Battery - 84th F. A. Bn.
Mrs. Virginia Ruetschi

It is with deepest sorrow that I inform you and anyone that knew my beloved husband George Ruetschi that he died on December 31, 2004.

George was working as the Manager of the kitchen staff at the Derby Lane Greyhound Dog Track in St. Petersburg, Fl when he felt sharp chest pains. 911 was immediately called but they could not save him. Doctors said it was a severe heart attack.

My husband served with the 84th Field Artillery during WWII. He was a loving husband, a devoted father and a proud veteran of the 9th Infantry Division. Enclosed is a check for the Memorial Fund in memory of my husband, George. May his soul rest in peace.

Virginia Ruetschi

47th Regt., 1st Bn. Hq. Co.
Thomas L. Cobb

My Army friend Ralph DeForest, age 86, Stamford, CT passed away during the night of Jan. 25-26. He had been in declining health for a couple of years and was living in a retirement home at Lawrenceville, GA near his daughter, Lorraine Johanson. I had visited him there a few times. The last time I saw him and Lorraine was on Veteran's Day, Nov. 11, 2004. They had a to-do at his place, about a 45 minute program. Most of the seats were filled. Ralph and I both wore caps with the 9th Division insignia on them.

Ralph was buried beside his wife Jan in the cemetery in the Long Ridge section of Stamford where his son Bob, who died in July 1985, and other relatives are resting. Also buried there is their neighbor, band leader Benny Goodman and his wife Alice.

Ralph built the house where he lived. He did most of the carpentry and stone work himself. Like his father, Ralph was skilled in wood work and I believe he will be best remembered for making 12 grandfather clocks. He was working on the 13th one when old age overtook him. His son-in-law Kenneth Johanson, also good in wood work, has agreed to finish it.

Thomas L. Cobb

PS: I would like to get in touch with anyone born before Aug. 16, 1916 and was in the 9th Inf. Div. between Aug. 1, 1940 and May 8, 1945, the end of the war with Germany. I am trying to find the oldest person that was in the 9th Division. I am 87. Any help will be appreciated.

T. L. C.

CHAPTER NEWS

ILLINOIS CHAPTER NEWS

We finally held a meeting on one of our nice days in December. At that time, we held the election of officers. Basically, what's left in the Illinois Chapter are the officers for the next term. Officers are as follows:

- President Mike Belmonte
- Secretary John Clouser (confirmed by phone)
- Treasurer Roger Elmer
- Chaplain David Heller

We also talked with Gordon Anderson in Tennessee and he is doing fine. He hopes to come to Illinois sometime in July. He had hoped to make it in for the Christmas Holidays but that trip was cancelled.

We missed putting an article in the last issue which should have reported the death of Paul Clark. (Thanks Agnes Speers for putting it in for us.) His wife Lorraine called us to give us that information Paul died on November 12th and services were held on November 16th in Indiana. He had a full military funeral and color guard. We were sorry we had to miss the funeral as Paul was one of our most active members until the last few years. Lorraine is now in a nursing home but will be going to an assisted living home within the next week. She is receiving therapy and doing well.

Dave Heller asked me to look into getting a copy of the Articles of Incorporation for the 9th. After several failed phone calls, I have written to the Secretary of State for Illinois requesting a copy. All I know is that we receive a form every year requesting the signatures of the officers and a fee. This form is sent to you. In talking with John Clouser, he vaguely remembers seeing a copy of the Articles of Incorporation and said he gave it to Chuck Koskie years ago. Whatever happened to it is anybody's guess.

Sorry we were not able to give you any information about the Corporate Seal for the Ninth. Thank you for your phone call and for including the list of Reunions and Officers in the last issue of the OCTOFOIL. I am sure many members will enjoy reading it.

We will be sending in our reservations for the Reunion in September very soon and hope to be able to make it. We were sorry we missed last years and are looking forward to seeing the WWII Memorial in Washington and all our fellow members.

We had a fairly mild Winter and hope that most of the snow is gone now that Spring is just around the corner. So until next time, stay well and take care.

Sincerely,
Mike Belmonte

GREATER NEW YORK AREA CHAPTER

Since our last meeting which took place on December 17, 2004 there has been no scheduled get-together in January and February. Thus, this scribe has little Chapter business to report except what info has come to me by phone or personal contact.

Sick Call

Many of our Ninthmen are ailing. Glad to note, however, that our venerable, respected division guidon, Dan Quinn, returned home from the hospital the first week in February. By phone he told me he was ready to tackle the necessary rehabilitation to get himself mobile again. His hip replacement, stomach disorder and bouts with pneumonia has taken a lot out of him but his Raider doggedness will overcome. Of course, his pretty wife Marie, at his side , oversees the pretty rehab girls.

Another comrade who has seen much of the VA hospital in Northport, NY recently is our "Cisco Kid" Tony Varone. He is being treated for a gout situation since November 2004, which flares up in spite of any relief he gets. Wife Viola and daughter Michele tend the Falcon's needs, back and forth from the hospital. Hope to see you dancing again, soon, Tony.

Other Chapter members on sick call include Gerry Levinson, Joe Rzesniowiecki, Al Lipton, Adolph Wadalavage, George Brown and Carl Winter. Others, who are under the weather, please let me know. I'm sure all these Ninthmen would welcome get-well wishes cards or calls.

From the Western Frontier

Charlie and Esta LiBretto report from their new Texas home that all's well with them. Active Charlie's only complaint is that on the old timers baseball team he plays with , they lob mushy softballs to him when he's at the plate. This super Go-Devil is used to hitting harder ball homers past the outfield _ not to the 2nd baseman, where Charlie can round the bases even before the ball is caught. Charlie used to be a Brooklyn, NY street stickball player in his youth, a real three-sewer hitter.

Meeting Calendar

Our next meeting will be on Friday, March 18th at 1:00 PM at the Franklin Square Library, Lincoln Street, Franklin Square, L.I. Weather permitting. At that time our new officers: President Ed Leddy, 1st VP Tony Varone, and 2nd VP yours truly, will initiate their 2005 agenda. Additional following dates are: April 15, May21 (Pinelawn), June 17, Sept. 16,, Oct. 21, Nov. 18, and Dec. 16.

Dues Due

It's dues time for 2005: \$10 for one year, \$25 for 3 years, and \$75 for

Lifetime Membership. Make checks payable to the 9th Inf Div Assn Greater NY Chapter. Send to Secretary / Treasurer Joe Maiale, [REDACTED]

Marv Levy

FLORIDA CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

FLORIDA CHAPTER 2005 REUNION: The Reunion Committee is busy searching for a hotel to hold the Fall Reunion. Some of the locations being considered are: Jacksonville, Daytona Beach, Sarasota and Ocala. Particulars will appear in future Newsletters after a commitment has been made.

FL. CHAPT. OFFICERS ARE RE-ELECTED: During the Sarasota Men's Business Meeting on November 19, 2004, the following FL Chapter Officers were elected by acclamation: Charles Van Der Poel, Pres.; Martin Gross, V.P.; Ed Gray, Sec.; Emil De Donato, Treas.; and H.F. Stansell, Chaplain.

TAPS SOUNDED FOR 2 CHAPTER MEMBERS: George A. Ruetschi, Sr. (Jan. 19, 1918 - Dec. 31, 2004). In a phone conversation with his wife Virginia, she said that George was working at the Derby Lane Greyhound Dog Track in St. Petersburg when he collapsed. He was rushed to the hospital but they couldn't save him. George died from an apparent heart attack on December 31, 2004. The Indian River Sunshine V F W provided a beautiful somber ceremony at the Royal Palm Gardens gravesite at which time, Virginia was presented with the traditional folded American Flag. George served with the 84th Field Artillery throughout the eight campaigns. After discharge in 1945, he went to work at Bethlehem Steel Co. Upon retiring from Bethlehem Steel, George and Virginia moved from their Ohio home to Pinellas, FL. They attended many National and Chapter Reunions making many friends. George and Virginia were married for 57 years. They have 3 sons and 1 daughter. Condolences may be sent to Virginia Ruetschi, [REDACTED]

EDWARD MARLIN MELLINGER DEAD AT 89: Marlin, as he preferred to be called, died on Thursday, January 27, 2005 at the Mease Dunedin Hospital. He was born in Carlisle, PA and moved to Florida in 1978 from Mechanicburg, PA where he retired after working with the Navy Supply Depot. He served with the 39th Inf. Reg. Medics all through Africa, Sicily, France, Belgium and into Germany. He was a member of Bethel Lutheran Church, Lodge 192 in Dunedin, FL. He is survived by his wife Helen of 56 years, two sons, a daughter and two grandchildren.

RET. GEN. LEWIS (CHIP) MANESS RECOVERING: After being rushed to the hospital three times during the months of November and December, 2004, Gen. Maness stated that he is doing fine. His illness started while visiting his daughter in Wellington, Florida towards the end of October. "Chip" complained about stomach pains. When taken to the hospital, the diagnosis was said to be inflamed ulcers. However, his second and third attacks proved to be more serious. Doctors determined that several arteries to his heart were clogged and required widening. Surgery was performed to place stents into the clogged arteries so that his blood could flow freely. Following his last surgery, Gen. Maness spent several weeks recuperating at his daughter's home in Wellington, FL. Shortly after the New Year, Gen. Maness returned to his home located at [REDACTED]

The Officers, members of the Florida Chapter and its Women's Auxiliary offer their prayers for complete recovery with the hopes of seeing him again at our next Florida Chapter Reunion.

NEW MEMBERSHIP ROSTER: Ed Gray has updated the changes in the old roster and sent the Master Copy effective January 1, 2005 to Emil De Donato. The problem is that as soon as they are printed in quantity, the rosters become obsolete due to the constant changes that occur as our membership ages. Therefore any member who would like a copy of the January 1, 2005 Roster, please send a self addressed stamped #10 envelope to Emil J. De Donato, [REDACTED] and a copy will go out soon after receipt.

DUES REMINDER: Please examine the due date on both your National and Florida Chapter Dues Cards. If the date has expired, kindly send in your dues at once. You may pay your National and the Florida Chapter dues through the Florida Chapter Treasurer, Emil De Donato, or pay your National dues directly by sending them to the National Organization's Treasurer, Joseph Killen, [REDACTED]

WOMEN'S AUXILIARY NEWS: Sue Johnstone's note stated that she is in good shape at 92 years of age. She gets around using a cane but otherwise is enjoying a healthy life. Sue sent in the newspaper notice regarding the demise of Ed Marlin Mellinger. Some members may recall that Sue lost her husband Bruce Johnstone in 1988. All Women's Auxiliary members are urged to send news to Audrey De Donato, Sec./Treas. of the Women Auxiliary to be included in the Florida Chapter Newsletter.

Emil J. De Donato

(Continued on Page 6)

SOUND OFF

2nd Bn. Hdq. Co. - 47th Inf.
Mrs. Willie W. Mizell



Rec'd the Nov - Dec issue of the OCTOFOIL Jan. 25, 2005. It was addressed to Willie W. Mizell, [redacted]

Willie served in the Army Sept. 27, 1940 - Sept. 27, 1945. I have a newspaper clipping that says: "He distinguished himself by heroic achievement in action against the enemy during the period 28 March 1943 to 10 April 1943 during the operations in Tunisia." I'm sure others did also.

Willie was in the 9th Infantry Division, Headquarters Company - 47th Inf. when discharged. While going thru his discharge papers I find he was entitled to the Bronze Star Medal that he didn't get. Do you know how I could get it? He did get a Purple Heart; I have that and some other medals. Enclosed is a check in memory of my husband, to help with the OCTOFOIL
Willie Warren Mizell
Oct. 28, 1921 - April 02, 2004

Please check your records as my son, William E. Mizell attended the past 3 reunions. At the last one in NY he joined for a lifetime membership. He said he paid by check; same address. We are looking forward to the 2005 reunion.

Sincerely,
Helen J. Mizell

P.S.: Willie had these 21 names in a little note book he carried while in service; they are:

Martin Steel	Don Bradly	Lou "Stud" Steinberg
Edward Lexvold	D. T. Thrasher	Ralph Anderson
Marvin Childers	Paulino Argujo	Guillunao Alaniz
John N. Ottenger	Santo Piatti	Lonnie A. Marfucci
Wilford Large	S. Padovono	Andrew Zaino
James Whisnant, Jr.	Frank Halpin	Raymond McKevin
Gene Collins	Jack Modlin	Jackie Della Porte

Do you know any of the above?? H. J. M.

CHAPTER NEWS

(Continued from Page 5)

MICHIGAN CHAPTER
(Via Everett N. Tapp)

I talked to Harry and Blondina Sager and learned that Harry had to have Triple Heart By-Pass surgery in July 2004, after his wife, Blondina, had fallen and broke her hip in NY at the reunion. But, they were able to drive up from Ohio to the Chapter Christmas Dinner party in Frankenmuth, Michigan. It was great to see them doing so well.

We also had in attendance the Olson's, Erik and Kaye, whose Uncle Lewis Annear was KIA in Normandy, July 11, 1944 while serving with Co. A, 47th Infantry. They would like to speak to members of that company who might remember him. They plan on joining us in DC in September.

I have enclosed a copy of a poem dedicated to the memory of the 9th Infantry Division entitled "Reunion" written by Mrs. Gerlinde Witt, the wife of my QM buddy, Curtis J. Witt. They sent it in a Christmas letter, and I felt that I should share it with everyone through the OCTOFOIL. I phoned to congratulate her and got permission to have it printed. So here it is with their blessing and OK.

Sincerely Yours,
"Tapper"

"REUNION"

Since nineteen hundred forty-five, once a year, it's time to meet
Members of the 9th Infantry Division in a comforting retreat,
Somewhere in the United States for a few carefree days,
To celebrate unity and comradeship in many wonderful ways.
When the time draws near they arrive by car and by plane
Happy and thankful to have survived an era cruel and insane,
When they had to fight in European countries, North Africa and Sicily
So people would be able to live without fear and breathe free.
The "Old Reliables" they were called,
Their hearts and souls were forever sold
To the country that they loved and defended so well
And from then on had heroic and sad stories to tell.
So many of their comrades were not so lucky to return
To their homeland and families, but they will forever remain
In respectful memories, that could never die
And their living buddies will worship and pray
And honor those buried in the earth far and away,
Until they will all meet at a reunion on one glorious day
In a better place without danger, heartbreak and pain.
Then the old warriors will reminisce once again
And thank God for the heavenly home, they so truly deserve,
For the days, months and years they had so unselfishly served.
By Gerlinde E. Witt

Division Headquarters Co.
John J. Wessmiller



I received my copy of the OCTOFOIL yesterday and as usual have read it from cover to cover.

I am enclosing a copy of a letter I sent to the Smithsonian Institute, referring to their book on the "Memorial of WWII" and their failure of honoring at least one of the 9th's History. I don't write often but it was too much to again see the historians omitting the 9th.

I am enclosing a check in memory of my two drivers killed in Normandy, Hal Fose and David Bingner.

Thank you all for keeping the Association going. Our ranks are being thinned. At 86, I'm lucky to be around. I have buried my wife and son. Best to the 9th.

John Weissmuller

To Smithsonian Institute
January 10, 2005
Dear Mr. Douglas Brinkley,

I was presented with a copy of your book. "The WWII Memorial". It was, and is, a magnificent representation of American servicemen and women, and our nation in one of its finest hours.

I am sure your research was detailed and exhaustive. However, I must take exception to an unacceptable error and one I respectfully request you correct.

The Ninth Infantry Division in which I served, and its commander, Lt. General Manton S. Eddy has constantly been overlooked and unacknowledged. Historians and writers seem to ignore the Ninth Division heroes, its accomplishments and its commander, General Eddy. The division experienced the second greatest number of deaths and casualties of any American division in WWII. It probably gained more enemy ground and territory, and spent more years and months in combat than any other division. It fought against the French, The Foreign Legion, Senegalese, Italians, Sicilians, Germans, and converted Russian German divisions.

General Eddy led the 9th through all these campaigns. He cut the Cotentin Peninsula in Normandy, which isolated the Germans from North and South. General Eddy turned his division toward Cherbourg and accepted its surrender from General Von Schlieben and Admiral Hennecke. He turned his division one hundred eighty degrees and spearheaded the breakthrough at St. Lo in spite of having lost over one hundred men who were killed in error by the US Air Force.

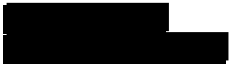
General Eddy's fighting in North Africa and Sicily was under the command of General George Patton. When Patton arrived on the European continent, the first commander he asked for was General Eddy. From that time on General Eddy commanded General Patton's XII Corps. I doubt if any American General fought as long and hard in any war. General Eddy was also a hero in WWI.

He is a forgotten man, as is Lt. Colonel Matt Urban or Urbanowitz, as I knew him. He is the most decorated soldier of WWII. These are two unsung heroes who lie close in Arlington Cemetery. A monument is erected for Matt Urban, which was financed and dedicated in his honor as a result of contributions from members of the 9th Division and the citizens of his home state of Michigan. His decorations outnumber Murphy's (no reflection on Murphy's heroics) Murphy's combat started in Sicily. Matt's started at sea before the 9th's invasion in Africa. His bravery is legendary to the men of the 9th. Eddy and Urban were there to kill the enemy, not to interest or entertain reporters and historians. His story is written in the publication, "The Matt Urban Story". His decorations are listed in the history of the 9th Division. His Congressional Medal was finally presented by President Carter, A little late and almost forgotten. I don't believe his number of Purple Hearts will ever be matched or equaled.

You dedicated a page to Audie Murphy. Matt Urban and General Eddy are at least worth a word of recognition. Your marvelous book will go down in history and these men should not be forgotten in its pages.

Sincerely,
John J. Wessmiller, Colonel US Army, retired

Ref: The Matt Urban Story



The Making of a Professional, M.S. Eddy
by Henry Philips
Greenwood Press

MAIL CALL

Co. M - 60th Inf.
Wilfred M. Thornton

After you sent me the OCTO-FOIL (Aug., Sept., Oct.) I got one in the mail a few days later. My Nov.-Dec. issue I just received today. I am enclosing a check to help out the Association.

At the 1982 National Reunion, 19 of us from Co. M decided to form our own group and we had a Co. M reunion each year for the next 18 years. In 2002 we were with the National at Pigeon Forge, Tenn. and that was our last one. Our ranks became too thin and most of us couldn't travel any more. We had 3 reunions in Alabama, one in Pennsylvania, one in Wisconsin, one in Niagara Falls, NY, one at Park City, KY, one in Clarksville, IN, two at Fort Bragg, one in South Bend, IN, one at Cincinnati, OH airport, one at the "Big-Mall" in Minnesota and 6 at Pigeon Forge, Tenn. We loved that place! ! ! Oh, yes, I almost missed one at Jeffersonville, IN.

Robert Bovanizer from Niagara Falls was our secretary and made most of the arraignments, and we took turns hosting the reunions. I have been to 9 National reunions over the years.

Now as to myself, I lost my wife 6 years ago. I live alone and I'm able to take care of myself. I joined the Army in October 1940 from up in Michigan, and I spent my time in Co. M from 1940 to 1945. I held every rank in the Company from a \$21.00-a-month private to Company CO. I never missed a day of duty, was wounded once, missed about one hour of duty January 29th, 1945. I came home on rotation leave. The Germans were tired of shooting at me, I guess. I have always said I was very, very lucky.

If any (old) Co. M men are still around, I would like them to contact me. I still send out about 40 Christmas cards every year.

I hope you can make sense out of all of this.

Sincerely,
Wilfred M. Thornton

Co. A - 15th Engrs.
Anthony J. Soprano

Enclosed please find my check to cover my dues for another three years.

I'm the real Tony Soprano. The TV program "The Soprano's" wanted to make a movie without pay - when I heard this - I said never mind.

I was interviewed by the Italian magazine "Primo" and have a write-up in the magazine along with a photograph of myself and my son who is also Tony Soprano, Jr.

Happy New Year ! !

Co. E - 47th Inf.
Charles and Mary McLhinney

It sure was good to hear from you and a surprise too. We want to thank you and the rest of the members of the 9th Inf. Division for allowing us to be among you. I feel very honored to be there. I have met some of the men who knew my brother, Walter F. McLhinney, in England and up until Germany. He was very proud to be with the 9th.

We hope to be in Washington, DC for the reunion this year. I only missed one reunion since my first in 1987. You have kept the 9th going and I'm sure Emma helps too. We think of you every day.

Thanks,
Charles and what's 'er name
(oh yes, Mary)

Co. F - 47th Inf.
Joe Bergin

I was talking to my old F company friend, Bob DeSandy. I told him that I haven't received at least the last two issues of "The OCTOFOIL". I moved a couple of months ago, from Grantham, NH, to # 69 Hilltop Place, New London, NH 03257.

I would appreciate it if you could change my address and if possible, send me a copy of the last issue. (Ed.'s Note: Copies of BOTH missing issues were sent post-haste.)

I have enclosed a small donation in memory of all deceased members of F - 47th. There aren't many of us left. Bob and I were together for several months and he was a great medic.

Thanks and best wishes for a Happy New Year,
Joe Bergin

2nd Bn. - 47th Inf.
James E. Leopold

Enclosed is my deposit check for the reunion/memorial get together in Washington in September. My wife and I look forward to it with great pleasure. Now if only our health holds out.

I am also enclosing a check for the association for whatever use it may need. The story about our shortfall is so real and I want the group to last as long as possible. More and more of my old gang from the 2nd Battalion, 47th Inf. are leaving us but I am still in touch with a few and hope to see others in Washington.

Keep up your good Work !
Kindest regards,
Jim Leopold,
formerly in "E", "G" and
HQ Company 2nd Bn. 47th

Co. K - 39th Inf.
Stephen F. Walsh

Herewith my dues plus, and apologize for delay. At age 88 can only wishfully look to renew next time around. Never see much reference to my "Class of Jan. '41, K Company, 39th Inf., 9th Division, Fort Bragg, NC".

Would be nice to see, maybe get some response from another "oldie".

Best regards to all and wishes for a Happy, Healthy 2005 and Beyond.
S. F. Walsh

P.S. : Trying to make Washington, DC. with P. Inspa of Newark, NJ, ex POW of Kasserine Pass. Should be a great experience. S.F.W.

Co. M - 39th Inf.
Charles Becker

Really don't remember when I last paid my dues so I'm sending you \$25.00 to take care of 3 years. Would also like to give to the Memorial Fund in memory of one of my old buddies from M Company, 39th Inf. Regt.

He was drafted along with a lot of us from the New York - New Jersey area and we all started in Fort Dix. He was one of the first from the company to be killed in Kasserine Pass.—A very unpleasant memory— "Frank Aiello", a great squad leader and a tough guy who never gave up no matter what the odds were. It still hurts me to think of that engagement and how ill prepared we were.

Sincerely,
Charlie Becker, M Co. -
39th Inf.

I & R platoon, 47th Hdq. Co.
Joseph De Fini
The Seabury at Field Home

I have moved to an "Assisted Home" as of December 1st. It is a beautiful place out in the country. My wife Rosalie is with me and we love it. (Dues are paid thru 2007.)

No more worrying about paying taxes on my old home. Also utilities every month. This "Assisted Home" was built two years ago and everything is new. - Food three times a day - Excellent meals - Maid service. My wife does not worry about cleaning the apartment

Now that my buddies from the 47th Regiment Headquarters Company know my new address, maybe they can drop a line, specially the men who were in the Intel and Recon platoon. I just received the November- December OCTOFOIL.

Sincerely,
Joseph A. De Fini

9th Recon Troop
Fred H. Schroeder

I guess my mind is playing tricks as usual. I thought I had sent in my change of address when I renewed, but I guess not. My old address was 134 Craver Road, West Sand Lake, NY 12196. The new address is on the mast-head above.

Another memory lapse: A couple of months ago I clipped an obituary from the Albany Times Union which mentioned the death of Peter D'Alessandro's wife and I cannot find it so I don't have all the particulars. Peter died several years ago and was a Medal of Honor recipient from E Company, 39th Infantry, I believe.

It was great seeing the Ninth Recon in the Octofoil headline. I didn't know John Bonkowski since I was a "repple depple" and only served from Normandy until the war's end as part of the Headquarters Platoon. Most of the guys were hardened veterans from the beginnings in North Africa.

Thanks,
Fred Schroeder, 9th Recon

Service Battery - 26th F. A. Bn.
William (Bill) Bongiorno

Hello to all my friends and comrades in arms. As our numbers get smaller, our bodies more fragile and our memories fading it is always stimulating to get the OCTOFOIL to jog the old memory. I am celebrating two special anniversaries this year.

First, and most important is my sixty three years of marriage to my Fort Bragg sweetheart and best friend Elna. Second is my twenty fifth anniversary as President of the 9th Inf. Div. Association.

I have always been proud of my military service, but more importantly, the lifelong friendships that many of us have shared over these many years. I deeply miss those many years in Worcester, MA with Father Connors, our chaplain and confidant, along with close friends and former association presidents such as Frannie Maher, Herb Olsen, Ron Murphy, Tom Boyle and so, so many others.

My wife and I are not in the best of health. Taps gets closer and closer for all of us. If there is any way I can possibly make this years reunion I will give it my best shot. I just don't know if it will be possible. In memory of all my dearly departed friends I am enclosing a small contribution for the association's memorial fund.

I wish all of our remaining comrades in arms continued health and may God bless you and the United States of America.

Bill and Elna Bongiorno

MAIL CALL

(Continued from Page 7)

Co. K - 47th Inf.
George Nicklin, M.D., FAPA, FAAP
and DP



It was a great joy to catch-up on the OCTOFOIL's and make contact with Lt. Lilly in Massachusetts, who loved my book with all of its information on the 121 days I was on the front; and defying bad luck in getting multiply wounded just as we finished the Bulge and moved toward the Remagen bridge, which I totally missed.

But we had such a magnificent morale in the fighting, though we had massive replacements. Lt. Chester Jordan was magnificent in our tough fighting and kept up our men's morale as CO, officer in control. And Lt. Ingram going all the way to the end. Joe Killacky, George Bastedo, the cook Emmet Schuette, too. They kept the men's morale up.

When I finally got to the end of my frontline duty I had massive injuries after 61 days of being a Medic. Medics on the front took it on the chin. For my first 60 days I was a rifleman and a mortar man. My squad leader was Joseph Corvino. I resisted requests for me to be a Medic, but the need was terribly high. I had one semester Pre-Med which

made me most knowledgeable about medical care on the front. I objected and they "pressed" me.

Full M.D.s were too valuable to be put on front. I received the Combat Medic and Combat Infantryman Badges, a very rare combo amongst Physicians or Medics, or infantrymen.

When the Germans finally hit me in mid-February, I was told I had too many wounds (55) to expect any normal life, and I should not finish my Pre-Med, nor should I expect marriage and/or children. Too many wounds.

But as I recovered after the war I looked back and felt "God injured me right, to be a good Psychiatrist." And maybe I could have children. . . . So I enclose our last two Christmas letters, with our 12 grandchildren and our retirement home after 51 years of Psychiatry, but I feel God was my copilot, and the OCTOFOIL and the people who have held on all these years are really wonderful.

You are free to publish this, throw it out, whatever. I think the 9th Division gave me a great boost to a great life, great wife, great kids and great co-veterans in the Ninth.

My love goes out to you all,
George Nicklin, M. D.

SEEKING

(Editor's Note: Here is a young man that I'm sure that we can help if we set our minds to it. Let us not let the "Checkerboards" and the "Lightnings" take all the credit on this one too. Here's our chance to speak out and keep the record straight.)

Ralf Klodt
Oberscheuren 41 A



My name is Ralf Klodt. I am a 33 year old German Remagen Bridgehead researcher and I live nine miles north of Remagen on the east side of the Rhine River.

I'm doing my research now for 10 years and I'm in touch with many US veterans, especially from the 78th and 99th Divisions. I'm collecting what materials about Remagen and the battle for the bridgehead of March 1945 that I can find, especially from the US side of things. As far as I know, I am the only person in Germany doing this on a large scale.

Also I'm guiding Americans in my area and going on tour with big groups of veterans when they come to Germany.

My research still has something to do with scratching the tip of the iceberg as there were up to 10 US divisions involved in the battle of the Remagen Bridgehead. An almost impossible research, but I do what I can. So far I have been able to collect large amounts of materials and personal accounts from the 78th and 99th Infantry Divisions, but I'm sorry to say that I'm doing very poorly on the 9th Infantry Division. The only book that I have on the 9th is "Remagen - Springboard to Victory", written by Henry Gerard Phillips.

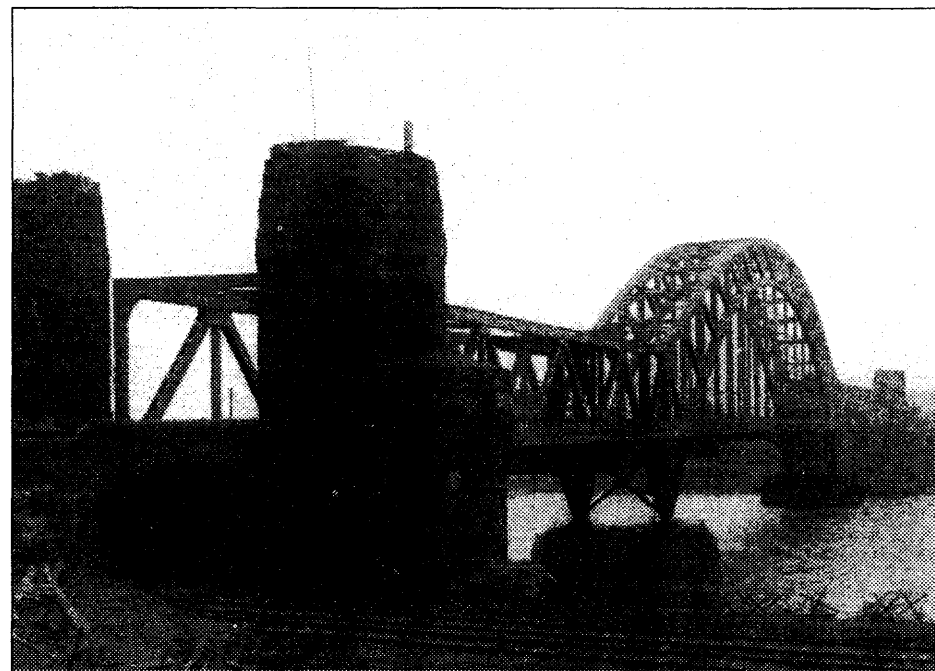
Here is my All-Out Effort!

I would like to ask all of you that were with the 9th Division in March 1945 to write to me. I'm looking especially for personal accounts of individual persons, and also for all kinds of unit histories, official reports (like interviews, After Action, Morning-, S2-, S3-, G2- Reports), maps or photos. Perhaps you can offer me good quality photocopies of any such materials. I will gladly cover all of your costs.

Here is a list of places and situations in March 1945 that might ring a bell: The approach towards Bad Godesberg, Bad Godesberg itself, Remagen, the Remagen bridge, the Rhine, the pontoon bridges, German air and artillery attacks on Remagen, the collapse of the bridge, Erpel, Unkel, Bruchhausen, Orsberg, Kasbach, Ohlenberg, Erl (Untererl and Obererl)- especially the German counter-attack from there towards Ohlenberg, Ockenfels, mountains and woods east of the Rhine, Hargarten, St. Katherinen, Lorscheid, Strodt, Notscheid, Elsaff, Vettelschoss, Kalenborn and it's heavily defended crossroads, Windhagen, the Autobahn (super-highway) and the breakout from the Remagen Bridgehead.

The nature of my research has something to do with putting together a big puzzle and for me each small piece of the puzzle counts! So if you can offer a few lines about a battle, a dramatic or even a funny situation (if there were any at all) or a small "unimportant" event - I'm interested in all of it. Please don't hesitate to contact me.

Best,
Ralf Klodt



LUDENDORFF BRIDGE

ARE YOUR DUES PAID?



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