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The Octofoil

9th Infantry Division Association

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4-1-2011

## The Octofoil, April/May/June 2011

Ninth Infantry Division Association

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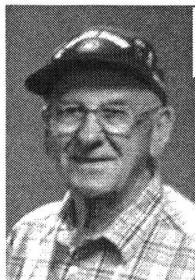
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# The Octofoil

Apr.-May-Jun.,  
2011

Volume LXVI, No. 2



President  
Paul Schumacher

## President's Message

Greetings from Tennessee. July 2011 is an important month this year for the association. We gather in New Orleans, Louisiana for the annual reunion which is always a significant event for us veterans. The Board of Governors have revisions and additions to the bylaws to consider and adopt.

Most important for the membership, July is the month when a newly revised membership and dues structure becomes effective. The Membership Application Form in this issue (see page 15) has been revised and updated to reflect the new changes. The Life Membership and the Three Year Membership are no longer offered. Please take a moment to acquaint yourself with the new procedures that become effective 1 July 2011.

Lastly, to receive *The Octofoil* beginning 1 July 2011 requires a subscription costing \$20.00 per year. (There is one exception: If you currently have a paid up Three Year Membership, the new rules will apply to you at the expiration of the three year period.) Holders of a Life Membership, please subscribe beginning 1 July 2011. Widows, descendants, friends, and the general public, please subscribe beginning 1 July 2011.

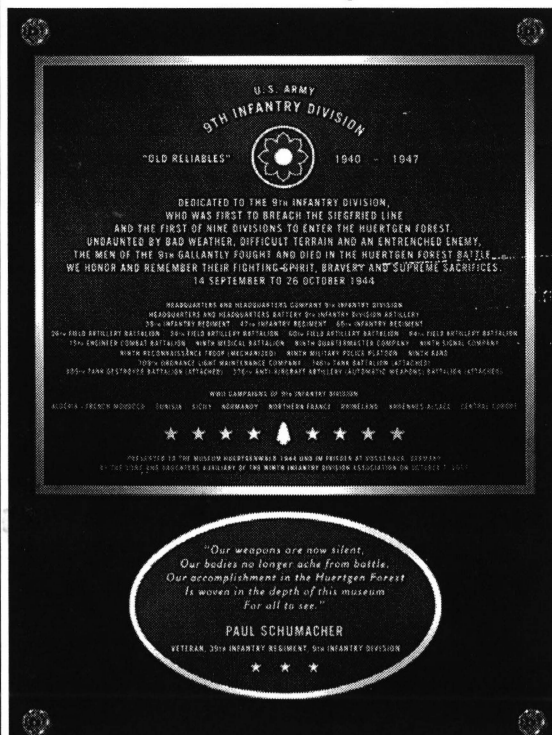
Send membership application, dues, and/or subscription to the newsletter to:

William G. Robey, [REDACTED]  
Paul Schumacher, President  
The Ninth Infantry Division Association

## Hürtgen Forest Plaque Dedication Ceremony Friday, October 7, 2011 8:00 p.m.

The Sons and Daughters Auxiliary Memorials/Plaques Committee has been busy since the last reunion designing and manufacturing a new plaque. This plaque will be located inside the Huertgenwald Museum at Vossenack, Germany. It is approximately eighteen inches by twenty-four inches and weighs about ten pounds. Manufactured of zinc material with a custom bronze finish makes it very impressive. The Octofoil insignia is in color since the plaque will be installed on an inside wall of the museum. The inscription reads "Dedicated to the 9th Infantry Division, who was first to breach the Siegfried Line and the first of nine divisions to enter the Huertgen Forest. Undaunted by bad weather, difficult terrain and an entrenched enemy, the men of the 9th gallantly fought and died in the Huertgen Forest battle. We honor and remember their fighting spirit, bravery and supreme sacrifices. 14 September to 26 October 1944."

This is followed by a listing of the units of the division and the eight campaigns. The bottom oval is a quote from Paul Schumacher, "Our weapons are now silent, our bodies no longer ache from battle, our accomplishment in the Huertgen Forest is woven in the depth of this museum for all to see." You are invited to attend a special plaque dedication ceremony on Friday, October 7, 2011, 8:00 p.m., at the local church in Vossenack, Germany. On Saturday, October 8, 2011 there will be a full day of events scheduled in the community. Veteran representatives are encouraged to attend as they did last year for the Remagen plaque dedication ceremony. Contact Gail Eisenhower at [REDACTED] for further information or send her an email: [REDACTED]



[www.octofoil.org](http://www.octofoil.org)

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## Editor's Note

Your continued cooperation and timeliness submitting all letters, photos, chapter reports, articles and so on to the editor, William Sauers, on or before **September 20, 2011** is appreciated. Items for publication sent anywhere else may be delayed or lost.

Notify the editor of address changes to ensure timely and accurate delivery of your newsletter.

Editor/Publisher contact information is located on page 15.

## OUR MISSION

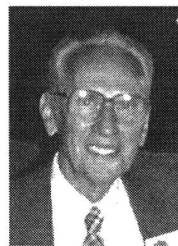
This Association is formed by the officers and men of the 9th Infantry Division in order to perpetuate the memory of our fallen comrades, to preserve the *esprit de corps* of the Division, to assist in promoting an everlasting world peace exclusively by means of educational activities and to serve as an information bureau to former members of the 9th Infantry Division.



## THE NINETY'S CLUB

Here's your chance to join an exclusive, much loved, respected, one of a kind club. Membership is free!!! All you need is a birthday celebrating your achievement of ninety (90) years. Send your name and recent photo to William Sauers, Editor.

### New Ninety's Club Member



Ernest Micka (93)  
Louisville, Ky.

### Report of the Secretary-Treasurer

This report is going to be fairly short as I have to have a complete financial report ready for the Board of Governors meeting in New Orleans. There will be a full financial report in the next issue of the newsletter, and a budget for next year also.

Our fiscal year ends on June 30, so please pay your dues if you have not already done so. Check the address label on your newsletter to find out the date your dues expire. If yours say June 2011, then you owe us your dues.

The process for transferring operations of the association over to the Sons and Daughters Auxiliary is coming along. We have time to work out the kinks and still do it right. We are shooting for transfer on July 1, 2013. This will all be discussed by the Board of Governors and the membership will be given the final vote by mail ballot. Hopefully this will all take place on schedule and will serve to perpetuate our association for many more years.

### RETURN TO BELGIUM AND CROSS THE MEUSE RIVER:

I recently received an email letter from Clement Derbaudrenghien of Belgium. He is offering 9th Infantry Division members a tour of Dinant and Hastiere with visits to Brussels, Namur, and Liege from Wednesday, September 28 to Wednesday, October 5, 2011. Contact me for details.

Bill Robey, Secretary-Treasurer

### 2011 Reunion Update

This year the reunion will be a little smaller than last year. Many of us thought the WWII Museum would be a much bigger drawing card that it turned out to be. We have almost 50 rooms and just short of 100 people. We have some who live in the area who are not staying in the hotel, but just coming in for certain events.

I still have 4 rooms available if you want to make last minute reservations. I must turn in the extra rooms by July 10. The reservation form is in the last issue of the newsletter.

When you get to the hotel, check into your rooms first and then go the Hospitality Room, which is the Gallier A&B on the fourth floor. Register and get your packet and if you want a copy of the group photo to be taken after the memorial service, then pay for the photo at registration and pick up your photo either Wednesday afternoon or all day Thursday.

If you are driving, pick up a parking identification card at the registration desk and put on your dashboard so the parking lot can identify those who are getting the reduced parking rate.

The Board of Governors will decide where the reunion will be for 2012, and we are looking at a choice between Buffalo, N.Y., Pittsburgh, Pa., and Jacksonville, Fla. We probably will go back to our weekend, Friday, Saturday and Sunday schedule next year, but the decision will be made in New Orleans.

Bill Robey, Reunion Chairman

## 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.

**Note:** Please make checks payable to:  
**The Ninth Infantry Division Association**

Send to: William G. Robey, Secretary-Treasurer

**Herbert Stern** in recognition of Bill Robey's efforts to have very successful reunions of our association

**Eugene Edwards** in memory of Carl Hull

**Lillian Chadwick** in memory of her husband **Lawrence H. Chadwick**

**Kathy Murray** in memory of her father **Edward McCaffrey**

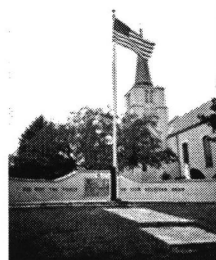
**Mary Nissim-Sabat** in memory of her father **Chester S. Mikus**

**Ernest G. Micka** in memory of Co. B, 15th Engineers and wife **Dorothy**

**Robert A. Watts** in memory of A Battery, 34th Field Artillery Battalion

"Lest We Forget"  
**Worcester Memorial Service**  
**Immaculate Conception Parish**  
**353 Grove Street**  
**Worcester, Mass. 01605**  
**Sunday, October 23, 2011 10:00 a.m.**

On Sunday, October 23, 2011 the 67th annual Memorial Mass and wreath laying ceremony will be held at the Immaculate Conception parish in Worcester, Massachusetts. This year's service marks another milestone in a long line of continuous Mass celebrations started by Father Edward T. Connors. Father Walter J. Riley, Pastor, will celebrate the Mass and conduct the memorial service. If you plan on attending please contact Gail Eisenhauer at [redacted] or send an email to her, [redacted] for lunch reservations after the service. Hotel arrangements are on your own if you plan to stay overnight.



## 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.

### Ninth Infantry Division Congressional Medal of Honor Recipients

S/Sgt. Herschel F. Briles, Co. C, 899th TD Bn; Near Scherpenseel, Germany; 20 November 1944  
2nd Lieutenant John E. Butts\*, Co. E, 60th Infantry; Normandy, France; 14, 16, 23 June 1944  
T/Sgt. Peter J. Dalessandro, Co. E, 39th Infantry; Near Kalterherberg, Germany; 22 December 1944  
Sgt. William J. Nelson\*, Co. H, 60th Infantry; Djegel Dardys, NW of Sedjenane, Tunisia; 24 April 1943  
PFC Carl V. Sheridan\*, Co. K, 47th Infantry; Frenzerberg Castle, Germany; 26 November 1944  
Captain Matt L. Urban, 2nd Battalion, 60th Infantry; Renouf, France; 14 June to 3 September, 1944

\* indicates posthumously awarded

Source: U.S. Army Center of Military History

Rose Botella Wife of Ernest Botella	Kenneth S. Jenks Hq. Btry., 34th F.A. Bn.	James S. Merrill Son of Dwight Merrill	V. Charles Stephens Hq. Co., 3rd Bn., 60th Inf. Regt.
Lawrence H. Chadwick Hq. Btry., 34th F.A. Bn.	Norman C. Johnson	Thomas Delli Priscolli 60th F.A. Bn.	Carl H. Winter Cannon Co., 60th Inf. Regt.
John Compel	Ennio L. Mariotti	Paul P. Prymak F Co., 47th Inf. Regt.	
Jean Geary Wife of Henry Geary	Dwight D. Merrill 15th Engr. Bn.	Charles Scheffel A - D Co.'s., 1st Bn., 39th Inf.	

### TAPS LETTERS

#### Josepha L. Jenks

Dear Octofoil Members, My husband, Kenneth S. Jenks passed away on February 18th as a result of a massive stroke. He was 91 years old and was a recognized member of your 90 + club. He was Chief Warrant Officer during World War II and treasured the years he served with General Westmorland who became a personal life long friend. He acquitted himself well and has many medals to testify to his bravery.

We had a wonderful life together and celebrated our 40th anniversary in October in grand and glorious style. He was a dedicated member of the Westbury Carle Place Rotary for many years. I will always miss him as will his many friends.

I am enclosing an article written by our niece as a loving memorial to her beloved uncle.

Signed, Josepha L. Jenks

#### Karen Walter

I am writing to inform you that my father Norman C. Johnson passed away March 14, 2009 in Kane, Pennsylvania. He was born February 1, 1918. He served with the 9th Infantry Division as a Private First Class from September 1940 to September 1945. During that time he was a prisoner of war in Germany for 2 years, 1 month, 3 days, nine hours and 15 minutes. He is survived by his wife Helen, two daughters, three grandchildren, and five great grandchildren. If space is available please include the enclosed stories that my father shared with us growing up.

Signed, Karen Walter

(Ed Note: Due to length of stories they will be published in the next issue.)

#### Herbert Stern

On behalf of our Texas Chapter and National Association I sadly advise you of the passing of Rose Botella, wife of Ernest J. Botella, 47th Inf. Regt. this past May 2011.

Rose had been an active member of the Texas Chapter since its founding. She was born and raised in France, and well knew what the men of the 9th had gone through in combat.

Her vivaciousness, her wonderful accent, but most of all her kindness, and friendliness will be missed.

Signed, Herb Stern, President  
Texas/Greater Southwest Chapter

#### Pauline K. Slezak

I am writing to inform you of the passing of my father, Paul P. Prymak. He was a life member of the 9th Infantry Division Association, who died at the age of 90 on December 31, 2009. Dad enjoyed receiving *The Octofoil* and looked forward to each issue and news of the members. He was active with the Michigan Chapter of the 9th Infantry Division Association.

Signed, Pauline Slezak

#### Lillian Chadwick

My husband, Lawrence H. Chadwick, 89, passed away September 12, 2010. Two days later he would have been 90. He was a World War II Army veteran, having served in the 9th Inf. Div., European Theater and was a life long member of the Ninth Inf. Div. Assn. and always looked forward to receiving *The Octofoil*. I am enclosing a check in memory of him.

Signed, Lillian Chadwick



## TAPS OBITUARIES



**John Compel**  
1919 - 2010

John Compel, 91, of McKeesport, died Saturday, November 27, 2010, in Select Specialty Hospital in UPMC McKeesport. He was born in Port Vue. He retired from U.S. Steel Irvin Works with 30 years of service, where he worked as a scarfer for many years and later supervised the water sanitation department.

John was a sergeant for four years with U.S. Army during World War II, having served in North Africa, Sicily, Italy and received a Bronze Star for his service. He was a lifetime member of St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church in McKeesport, a member of the ASHA (American Slovak Hall Association), a member for over 40 years at the White Oak American Legion Post No. 701 and the 9th Infantry Division Association. He was preceded in death by his wife of 61 years Tillie Compel; his parents; and his two brothers.

He is survived by his son and daughter; four grandchildren; four great grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

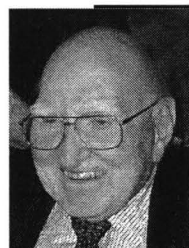


**Jean D. Geary**  
1932 - 2011

Jean D. Geary, 79, of Allentown, passed away on Wednesday, June 1, 2011 in Hospice House VNA St. Lukes. Jean was the wife of Henry S. Geary and they would have celebrated their 61st anniversary this coming December. Born in Allentown, Jean was a daughter of the late Raymond and Lula

(Person) Schweitzer. Jean was a Secretary for Apollo Metals in Bethlehem for seven years prior to retiring in 1995. Before Apollo, she worked at Central Catholic H.S., the former Phoenix Clothes, the former E.G. Christ Printing, and in the kitchen at Sacred Heart Hospital. She was a member of St. Lukes Lutheran Church in Allentown where she was a member of the Church Council, and was a volunteer for the After School Program. Jean was Past President of the Senior Citizens at Our Lady Help of Christians, was Chaplain for the Ladies Auxiliary of VFW Post 2124 in Allentown, and was Treasurer for the 9th Infantry Division Assn. Ladies Auxiliary. Jean also volunteered at the Veterans Clinic in Allentown.

Surviving are her husband, two daughters and son; a brother; seven grandchildren; eight great grandchildren.



**Kenneth S. Jenks**  
1919 - 2011

**Headquarters Battery, 34th Field Artillery Bn.**

Kenneth S. Jenks, of Westbury, beloved husband of Josepha, died peacefully February 18, 2011 at Winthrop Hospital after a short illness.

Mr. Jenks, born in Manhattan on August 5, 1919, grew up in Brooklyn. He left his studies at St. John's University behind to join the U.S. Army in August 1938. His military service included time with the 1st, 9th and 65th Infantry Divisions, primarily as an artillery supply officer.

Beginning in December 1942, he served alongside the British 1st Army and French Foreign Legion during the campaign in North Africa. Following victory there, he took part in campaigns in Sicily, Normandy, Northern France, the Ardennes (Battle of the Bulge), the Rhineland, Central Europe, Czechoslovakia and Austria. After returning home at the end of WWII, Mr. Jenks joined the international banking firm of Brown Brothers, Harriman and Co., where he was employed for 41 years.

He and his wife Josepha have lived in Westbury for over 40 years. During their long, happy marriage, they traveled extensively and enjoyed one another's company immensely.

**Ennio L. Mariotti**  
1922 - 2011

Ennio L. Mariotti, 89, of Bethlehem, passed away on Thursday March 3, 2011 in his residence. He was the loving husband of Margorie "Midge" (Franzo) Mariotti with whom he shared 57 years of marriage. Born in Perugia, Italy, he was the son of John and Palmira (Peschi) Mariotti. Upon graduation from Jessup High School, his family moved to Bethlehem so that Ennio could work at the Bethlehem Steel rather than as a coal miner like his father. He would eventually retire from there after 43 years of faithful service. Ennio served as a sergeant in the US Army having fought at the Battle of the Bulge. A man of few words, he enjoyed the simple pleasures of life: reading the daily newspaper from cover to cover, spending time with family, and cooking, especially making homemade meat ravioli. His memberships include charter membership in the Bethlehem Chapter of UNICO, the Holy Name Society of the former Our Lady of Pompeii Church, Lehigh Valley Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, the Ninth Infantry Division Association, social membership with the Bethlehem Heights Athletic Assoc. and finally, 25 years as a Musikfest volunteer. Survivors: In addition to his wife, he is survived by a brother; two daughters; four grandchildren; two great grandchildren.



**Dwight D. Merrill**  
1919 - 2011

**15th Combat Engineer Battalion**

Dwight Dearborn Merrill, 91, died April 10, 2011 at Hibbard's Nursing Home, Dover-Foxcroft, where he had been a patient since 2008. He was born June 16, 1919 in Portland, Maine, the son of Stanley and Inez (Dearborn) Merrill.

Dwight graduated from Foxcroft Academy in 1938 and after graduation entered into the U.S. Army and served in WWII as a 1st Lt. Combat Engineer in the 9th Infantry Division and was the recipient of two Purple Hearts. After his term in the Army he returned to Dover-Foxcroft and farmed with his father, then took a job with the U.S. Postal Service where he continued to work until his retirement in 1985. Dwight was an avid golfer and enjoyed all sports, but especially enjoyed going to the University of Maine hockey games with his grandson and great grandson. He was an outdoorsman who enjoyed wildlife and anything that would require being outside. Dwight was a member of the Mosaic Masonic Lodge #52 A.F.A.M., where he was Past High Priest of the Piscataquis Chapter, the Republican Committee, the Dover-Foxcroft Congregational Church, the 9th Infantry Division Association, the Purple Heart Association, and the U.S. Postal Worker Association.

Dwight is survived by two sons; a sister; two daughters-in-law; seven grandchildren; eight great grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.



**James S. Merrill**  
Son of Dwight D. Merrill

James S. Merrill, 64, died June 8, 2011, at his home. He was born Nov. 27, 1946, in Dover-Foxcroft, son of Dwight D. and Patricia M (Packard) Merrill. His is now at peace and has gone to meet his Lord and Savior. Jim and his wife, Gloria, came to the Machias area in 1975 from New Hampshire, and purchased Machias Valley Waste Removal which he owned and operated until 1990, then worked for Washington Academy and most recently for the University of Maine at Machias until his retirement in November 2010 due to ill health. Jim graduated from Foxcroft Academy in 1965 and attended Gorham State Teachers College. His love of all sports was phenomenal, but his sport of choice was

(continued on page 5)

(James S. Merrill...continued from page 4)

golf and on any given day you could see him on a golf course, rain or shine. His favorite phrase was, "a bad day of golf is better than a good day at work." Jim had a childhood dream from the first time he held a golf club to someday attend the Masters Golf Tournament in Augusta, Ga., and, because of some dear friends, that dream came true in 2008. Jim's affiliations included Warren Lodge No. 2, East Machias, where he was a past master; Washington Chapter No. 16, Machias; St. Croix Council No. 11 Royal and Select Masters, Calais; Hugh De Payens Commandry No. 15, Calais; Anah Shrine, Bangor; Order of Eastern Star No. 83, Machias; and the Sons and Daughters of the 9th Infantry Division Association. Throughout the years, Jim had also been a member of several community organizations. Jim was predeceased by his father, Dwight D. Merrill; mother, Patricia (Packard) Merrill; brother, John P. Merrill; and sister Joani Martin. He is survived by his wife of 43 years, Gloria J. Merrill; brother, Richard W. Merrill of Danville, N.H.; and other special relatives.

**Thomas Delli Priscoli, Jr.**  
1918 - 2011

**60th Field Artillery Battalion**

Thomas Delli Priscoli, Jr., 93, died Thursday, April 7, 2011 at Baystate Medical Center. He was born in Springfield to the late Theresa (Amato) and Thomas Delli Priscoli, Sr. Thomas was employed for over 37 years for the City of Springfield retiring in 1982 as the Asst. City Treasurer. He served his country with the U.S. Army from 1942 - 1945 during World War II. He attained the rank of Corporal and received the European, African, Middle Eastern Theater Campaign Ribbon with Bronze Service Arrowhead and the Bronze Star. Besides his parents Thomas was predeceased by his brother and is survived by two sisters, a niece, grand nephews, great grand nieces and great grand nephews.

**Paul P. Prymak**  
1919 - 2009

**F Company, 47th Infantry Regiment**

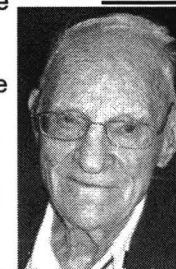
Paul P. Prymak, 90, died on December 31, 2009. Paul initially enlisted in the Polish Army in Canada, where he trained as a mechanic, and was prepared for battle. When the United States entered the war following Pearl Harbor, he had the option to switch over and join the U.S. Army, which he did, becoming a private in the 9th Infantry Division, 47th Regiment, F Company. He saw action in France, coming over the 2nd wave of the D-Day invasion of Normandy. As a scout, he did reconnaissance through France, and Germany. Paul was wounded by a German 88mm artillery shell in the Battle of Hurtgen Forest, October, 1944. After recovery at a hospital in England, he was sent to guard and train German POWs to repair U.S. tanks, jeeps and trucks damaged in the war. He was awarded a number of medals, which included the Purple Heart, Bronze Star, and Combat Infantry Badge, to name a few. He was honorably discharged in 1946. Paul later worked for the U.S. Postal Service, and retired in March of 1980.

His wartime experiences gave him the "heart" to act as a Disabled American Veterans Chaplain, serving with the East Detroit D.A.V. Chapter 107. For nearly 18 years, he, accompanied by my mom, attended meetings and social gatherings, and every funeral of every member. Dad often led in a prayer, read a eulogy, and draped the coffins with American flag. He presented bibles and crosses to each family. If he couldn't bring back the comrades who had passed away, at least he could bring comfort to the families who survived them.

As a retiree, he remained active with several Michigan senior organizations in both East Pointe (FKA East Detroit) and the Plymouth and Plymouth Twp. Senior's Groups. Paul was president of the Jet Setters Senior Club at Divine Savior Church in Westland, Mich. for several years. He also served as the senior's representative on the Church Council for a couple of years.

(continued next column)

He was preceded in death by his wife Geraldine and a daughter. Surviving are another daughter and son; four grandchildren and one great grandchild.



**Charles Scheffel**  
1919 - 2011

**A - D Company's, 39th Infantry Regiment**

God called Charles Scheffel home to be with his beloved wife Hetty Ruth on Friday, June 24, 2011. Charles and Ruth were married for 57 years before her death in 1999.

Charles was born in Enid, Oklahoma to Charles and Selma Ekdol Scheffel. His father died when Charles was 12 at the beginning of the Great Depression. He is preceded in death by both parents, his brother Stanley, also of Enid, and his daughter Mary Elaine Martin of Pryor, Oklahoma. His is survived by his daughter Susan Burrus, and son Lee Scheffel. Also by six grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

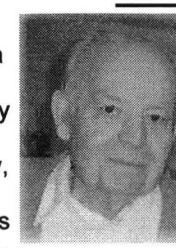
Charles played basketball for legendary coach Hank Iba at Oklahoma A&M (now OSU) from 1938 to 1942 when he received his B.S. in Finance and commission as an infantry officer. Charles served in the U.S. Army Infantry in North Africa, Sicily, during D-Day +1 and throughout France. The company he commanded was one of the first to cross into Germany leading to the ultimate defeat of the Nazi Army.

He was a true war hero, serving in the 9th Infantry Division and receiving the Silver Star, Bronze Star with Valor and French Croix de Guerre for gallantry in combat, plus two Purple Hearts for wounds received in battle. He chose to return to his company after each battle wound and was finally sent home after he lost his trigger finger in combat. His two and a half years in combat have been documented in the book *Crack! & Thump* by Barry Basden. He was also featured in the recent History Channel Series *World War II in High Definition*.

After the war Charles and Ruth settled in Oklahoma City where they had three children and he built a successful independent insurance agency which later merged with Ledbetter Insurance. After retirement, Charles and Ruth set a goal to try and visit all 195 countries in the world and did in fact visit all but 21.

In 1998, after living in Oklahoma City for more than 50 years, Charles and Ruth moved to San Antonio where she died a year later. Charles continued to live in San Antonio until recently when he moved to Richardson to be near family. Charles lived a long and productive life and died peacefully sitting in his favorite easy chair.

According to his wishes, his body has been donated for medical research. Charlie was a committed Christian who recently transferred his membership to First United Methodist Church, Richardson. At his request his grave marker will read, "Alive in Christ."



**V. Charles Stephens**  
1916 - 2011

**Headquarters Co., 3rd Bn., 60th Infantry Regt.**

Age 94, passed away on Friday, April 15, 2011 at Whispering Pines Health Care Center, Valparaiso. Born on June 29, 1916 in East Chicago, Ind., to the late Floyd and Laura (nee Raymond) Stephens. He graduated from Valparaiso High School, American Institute of Banking, and Graduate School of Banking at University of Wisconsin, member of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, retired Executive Vice-President of First National Bank, Valparaiso, past President of Porter County Banker's Association, past Chairman US Savings Bond for Porter County, past Director of Valparaiso Chamber of Commerce, past Director Christian Community Action, life-member American Federation of Musicians #732, member

(continued on page 11)



## CHAPTER AND AUXILIARY NEWS

### TEXAS & THE GREATER SOUTHWEST CHAPTER

Summers Mill, Texas  
April 7 - 8, 2011

It can't get any better than this! Three old veterans at a meeting with two physicians in attendance. We have Herb and Cathy Stern to thank for that as one is their son and the other is their son-in-law. These Doctors have a great sense of humor and made the evening a fun event.

There was a little difficulty in getting the two barbeque grills up and running. With one phone call the Summers Mill management two of their staff arrived on the scene so Sam Burns could get the repast of chicken, pork ribs, and sausage under way. With the side dishes the ladies had prepared in advance, no one left the table hungry.

Mary Blann Cooper brought us up to date on the Auxiliary's work. They want to identify the major battles the Division participated in during WW II. If appropriate those locations might be marked at a later date. No - - - not that "Kilroy Was Here", but the Ninth Infantry Division was.

As the evening dinner was starting, Ron Burrus arrived from Denton, a 200 mile trip, and then drove back that night. Ron's grandfather served in the Ninth. At the last National Meeting Ron had the opportunity to meet his grandfather's commanding officer. Ron served in the 82nd Airborne and was a Fort Bragg when the Ninth had their last meeting at the Fort.

Those in attendance were Lavonne Blann, Sam Burns, Anita Biver, Ron Burrus, Mary Blann Cooper, Bonnie Denbo, Dr. Charles Stern, Dr. Richard and Nancy Rutner, Herb and Cathy Stern, and Gordon Schneider

We plan on returning to Summers Mill next November. After all, when you find a facility that goes all out to make your stay enjoyable, they deserve your business.

Gordon A. Schneider, Secretary

### FLORIDA CHAPTER

Let's do it again: That was the sentiment of the members who attended the 2011 Florida Chapter reunion on May 2 - 4 in Daytona Beach. For those members who had to cancel out due to sickness and the members who couldn't make the reunion for various reasons, here is what took place. Audrey and Emil De Donato arrived a day earlier to set up the Hospitality Room. Their ¼ ton truck was loaded with signs, displays, food, drinks, tapes and other goodies. The personnel at the Plaza Ocean Club Hotel furnished the Hospitality Room with 4 round tables with 8 chairs to each table, 3 rectangular table for the food and drinks, a VCR attached to a large screen TV, a refrigerator, a micro wave oven and a stage for the Playhouse Players.

Pizzas, barbeque wings, salad, snacks, drinks was the menu for the Pizza Party on Monday evening. Following the eating and drinking, a one hour tape featuring Yakov Smirnoff, the raucously funny comedian from Russia was played on the large TV screen. Joining our group for the Pizza Party was Linda McMahon, Director of Daytona Beach Convention & Visitors Bureau. Ms. McMahon assisted the Reunion Committee in their search for a hotel, places to go and things to do. Another guest, Carol Pizzuto, whose father served with the 39th Infantry, came with her cousin and stayed for the Pizza Party. Carol brought a map printed on a material resembling linoleum which showed the route that 39th Infantry took from Ireland to Algeria in the invasion

(continued next column)

of North Africa on November 8, 1942. Carol is planning to take that map to the National Reunion in New Orleans to ask if the National Organization could use it. Carol live in Palm Coast, a community approximately 30 miles north of Daytona Beach, learned about the reunion through the Florida Chapter news in *The Octofoil*.

Audrey Parente, a staff writer with The Daytona Beach News Journal arrived just before the Pizza Party started. She interviewed the members and wrote a 3 column 7 inch story entitled "Hitler's Nemesis soldiers debate Bin Laden's legacy." The story appeared in the May 4, 2011 issue of the newspaper. A copy of this story may be had by contacting Emil De Donato

For the next two mornings, the group enjoyed a scrumptious buffet breakfast at the hotel's restaurant. Choice of several kinds of meat, scrambled eggs, southern gravy, rolls, butter, orange juice, coffee, Danish, several kinds of fresh fruits, etc. The cost of the breakfast and gratuity was included in the packaged deal. Free time followed Tuesday's breakfast. Some enjoyed the nice weather on the beach, the ocean waters, while others went sight seeing, shopping or enjoyed the beautiful large Hospitality Room. At 5:00 p.m. the group went to the Olive Garden Restaurant located minutes away from the hotel. The restaurant staff set up a special area for the group. Each person ordered their meal from the menu. General Manager, Mervin Jermin, and other members of the restaurant staff, came to greet our group. Mr. Jermin treated us to free coffee and a delicious dessert. Back at the hotel at 7:00 p.m. Awaiting our members was a group from The Daytona Playhouse who performed a series of three skits. Because there was no performance scheduled at the Daytona Playhouse Theatre during the days of our reunion, the Playhouse management offered the players as a substitute at no cost to us. However we did make a good donation. Upon departure of the Daytona Player, tapes of previous National Reunions were played and enjoyed for the remainder of the evening.

Following the scrumptious buffet dinner on May 4th, the Florida Chapter business meeting was held in the Hospitality Room. Treasurer Emil De Donato chaired the meeting due to the cancellations received from Pres. Joe King and VP Faye Moser whose spouses were too sick to attend. Chairman De Donato called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Chaplain H.F. Stansell said the opening prayer followed by a moment of silence in honor of all the 9th Infantry Division soldiers who were killed, those who died since the end of the war and all soldiers who made the supreme sacrifice in all U.S. wars.

A special acknowledgement was cited in honor of Beverly Johnson, who came with her father Ed Gray who now lives in New Jersey, Kathy Barker, a friend of Lulu Winingham who shared the long car drive from Allardt, Tenn. and Pauline Gowen, from Ocala, Fla., wife of deceased member, Ed Gowen, for attending our reunion for the first time.

The minutes of the 2010 chapter reunion were read by Secretary Audery De Donato followed by the treasurer's report by Emil De Donato. The minutes and the treasurer's report were accepted as read.

Highlights of the meeting are as follows:

1. After discussions on whether the Florida Chapter should remain active, a vote was taken with the majority voting to keep the Florida Chapter alive.
2. To continue to hold reunions as long as someone will chair them.
3. Emil and Audrey De Donato volunteered to chair the 2012 reunion. Length to 2 days instead of 3.
4. Ocala, Fla. Was agreed for the 2012 reunion.
5. Treasurer to stop collecting dues from its members
6. A motion called for new chapter officers. No nominations were

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(Florida Chapter...continued from page 6)

made so the Secretary cast one vote to retain the same slate for another year.

As there was no other old or new business to discuss, a motion was made and approved to adjourn the meeting and seconded by Herb Frank and approved by the membership. Chaplain Stansell gave the closing prayer. Chairman De Donato adjourned the meeting at 10:35 a.m.

Free time was enjoyed by the members until 6:30 p.m. when the group convoyed to the Olive Garden restaurant to enjoy dinner. The Olive Garden staff and management were exceptionally courteous and provided excellent service. For the remaining time of the evening, tapes of previous reunions were played. Marty Gross and his wife Rosalyn enjoyed watching the "Italian General" put on his act during the 1994 National Reunion in Lake Placid, N.Y.

Throughout the duration of the 2011 chapter reunion the words "Let's due it again next year" was expressed by the members.

News wanted: Please send any news to Emil J. De Donato,

### GREATER NEW YORK AREA CHAPTER

The N.Y. Chapter held its annual Memorial Service in the VA National Cemetery in Farmingdale, Long Island, N.Y. on Armed Forces Day, Saturday, May 21, 2011. The day was sunny and warm and the Stars & Stripes fluttered from the many flag poles that lined the Boulevard of Flags. After meeting in the parking lot about 10:30 a.m. members rode in their cars to the main ceremony area and placed an Octofoil wreath on front of the speaker's rostrum.

The authorities had set up 20 chairs beneath the plastic canopy but only ten members were able to attend: Joe Charvat and his daughter, Christine (Joe's wife, Betty, had passed away on April 12, 2011), Anton & Charlotte Dietrich, Joe Killen, Joe & Sadie Maiale, Tony & Viola Varone, and Al Zenka.

1st VP Dietrich began the service by leading members in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. The cemetery crew then played a recording of the Star Spangled Banner. Chapter chaplain Killen gave the convocation and a moment of silence was observed for our deceased 4,851 WWII buddies and the MIA's & POW's. Killen, Maiale and Varone spoke for a moment with heartfelt reflections.

At closing of services TAPS were played. The group decided to forego an after-service meeting and go directly to the nearby Spartan restaurant for lunch. (Since this scribe could not attend due to illness, this report is written from combined member statements.)

### LAST MEETING BEFORE SUMMER HIATUS

On Friday, June 17, 2011, the N.Y. Chapter met at its regular command post in the Franklin Square Memorial Library, Franklin Square, L.I., N.Y. The meeting was attended by Joe Charvat, Anton Dietrich, Arno Heller, Joe Killen, Marv Levy, Joe Maiale and Tony Varone. 1st VP Dietrich began the meeting with our regular opening ceremony. Reading of the Minutes of the previous meetings was suspended due to this scribe's illness when I could not attend. The Financial Report was made by Secretary/Treasurer Maiale. After some general discussion Maiale suggested we go for lunch at nearby JANI restaurant where we would continue our meeting. Charvat, Dietrich, Killen, Levy + Barbara (my driver), and Maiale did so. Unfortunately Tony Varone had a vehicle mishap just as he was arriving a few yards from the library for the meeting. A speeding truck hit Tony's car as he was making a turn onto the library street. After the police report Tony attended the meeting, thankfully, not injured. The car was drivable but

(continued next column)

needs front end repairs.

Last month Joe Killen was driving on the Southern Parkway on Long Island. He suddenly had a low sugar episode and pulled over onto the shoulder. Incredibly, his grandson, driving in the opposite direction, recognized Joe's car and came to his aid. Local Fire Department ambulance responded. Before the attendants could remove Joe he lost consciousness falling on his face, breaking his nose. He was taken to Mercy Hospital in Rockville Centre where he spent four days under treatment and observation. Joe appeared fine when he attended the meeting.

### LIBRETTO IN ARLINGTON

Esta LiBretto called from Texas to let us know that husband Charlie's remains have been interred in the Columbarium in Arlington National Cemetery, Washington D.C. Former N.Y. member, WWII 60th Infantry, runner, Charlie was given a full military ceremony - rest in peace, old buddy.

### DeROBERTIS GETS HIS SHARE OF FAME

Bill Muldoon sent us a copy of newspaper interview from the Pocono Record with former N.Y. member, Anthony DeRobertis who now lives in Stroudsburg, Pa. with his wife Rose.

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### LADIES CORNER

The Ladies Auxiliary is deeply saddened by the death of Jean Geary who has been a leader in the auxiliary for many years as well as a dear friend to the members. Our condolences to her husband and family. Jean will be missed.

As for the ladies luncheon that is normally held during the annual meeting, it was determined after several negotiations with the hotel that prices were too high to justify having a luncheon this year. Instead there will be a meeting of the members on Wednesday at 1:00 p.m. in the Gallier Room A&B (the Hospitality/Registration room) in the Sheraton. A new treasurer for the Ladies Auxiliary will need to be officially elected. If you have previously sent a check for the lunch to Jean Geary, please let Roz Gross or Judy Goldsmith know so a refund can be issued. Right now we are dealing with transferring the auxiliary's treasury books and account and we do not have access to the records.

I look forward to seeing the auxiliary members in New Orleans.

Roz Gross  
President, Ladies Auxiliary

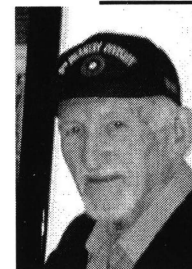
### JEAN GEARY++++MY FRIEND

Today is a very sad day for the 9th Division Ladies Auxiliary and myself. One half of my team, our J&J Team, aka, Jean and Judy, is no longer physically with us. We will miss her loyalty and dedication but will keep her spirit forever with us. It is almost like the end of an era for the Ladies Auxiliary. I would like to think that Jean knew how loved and respected she was to all of us...our men included. We all miss you, Jean. We owe, to Jean, a continuing effort to keep the auxiliary a contributing factor in the lives of all veterans. Did you know that Jean volunteered to many local veterans organizations and numerous charities? There is a very big void on earth today. I am sure I speak for all our ladies in sending our heartfelt sympathy to Henry and all the Geary family.

Respectfully,  
Judy Goldsmith, Past President 9th Division Ladies Auxiliary



Emil De Donato



Marv Levy



Rosalyn Gross  
President



J and J Team, 2006



## THE OBERKIRCHEN DIARY (Part Two)

*A German Perspective of the Ruhr Pocket Battle by the Second Battalion/47th*

By Terry R. Barnhart, son of Robert G. Barnhart, E Company/47th. Infantry Regiment

*The following is the second part of a translated and unpublished diary by a German Fraulein during the Battle of Oberkirchen 3-5 April 1945 in which the Second Battalion/47th Infantry Regiment participated. The first part was published in the previous Octofoil and describes the conditions in the village before the battle. This second part describes the two day battle. The diary has been edited for brevity, but hopefully the meaning and story remains true to the author's intent. It provides a unique and surprisingly accurate glimpse from a German civilian's perspective of the Battle of Oberkirchen.*

### Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 1945

Early morning the shooting stopped and we dared to go into our rooms. Gertrud Foerster and I dared to go on the road. Dueppe had got a direct artillery hit, Schuette in the upper village too. Aunt Kathrinchen Deuse was wounded. Family Himmelreich also had got a direct hit, Vogt was burning. We looked at the damages and talked about them with the soldiers. At Foersters was a medical captain with 3 wounded lieutenants, he had just bandaged them.

The soldiers asked us to cook potatoes for 30 men. Together with the soldiers we peeled the several buckets of potatoes. Some of the soldiers were totally exhausted from the fighting, but had to go back to the fighting soon.

All of them were embittered, as they now were forced to fight in a hopeless fight. Now I realised for the first time, that we lived at the front-line. An officer, who returned from the fighting with his soldiers, threw his gun away and said embittered, "It is senseless. I do not continue."

We had just finished our meal, if you can call this a meal, the soldiers had food. Then the artillery fire started again with increased force, and we escaped to the cellar.

Then many hours of never ending artillery fire came. When it was finished our soldiers forwarded into our cellar. They wanted to defend themselves against the assaulting Americans from our cellar. We asked them to stop that as there was a dying woman among us (*Frau Holdrichen*). They did not know what to do until their leader came and told them to continue fighting. The soldiers told the officer that we had told them to leave the cellar or throw away the guns. This one answered... "then I will burn down the house with the tank."

You (*can*) imagine our misery.

We hurried through a horrible tank fire into the cellar of the house opposite the road (*Feldmann*). There we stayed with about 30 captured French men with their attendant, some more horrible hours under tank fire. American fighter bombers bombed German tanks and shot at them.



*A 500 pound bomb likely dropped by a P-47 was removed from the Alt Postal Stasse about 1960, some fifteen years after the Oberkirchen Battle. Photot from Georg Droste.*

As there were some tanks around the corner, we felt that the misery was heavy and then the Americans arrived. We all sighed and said, "We all got over it." This was April 3<sup>rd</sup>, about 6 P.M.

"Are there (*any*) German soldiers (*here*)," the Americans asked? The German soldiers, who were in the cellar surrendered. The French shouted with joy towards freedom.

I was the only one in the cellar who spoke English and I translated as well as I could. I explained that there were only civilians here in the cellar and said... "we are the inhabitants of the next house. Can we go into this house?" The American was very friendly. He accompanied us to our house, but he told us that we had to remain in our cellar during the next 48 hours.

As we did not hear of any activities of the enemy at the moment, it was quiet in the village, (*then*) we dared to go into our rooms. All window glasses were broken, but the rest was ok. We were happy and we thought everything would be over now. But it was peculiar that we did not see the Americans anywhere. Some were in the school, but there were only few soldiers. I recognized one of them. This one explained when I asked him, what would happen that we had to remain in the cellar until the arrival of the American supply. Additionally he explained that a German attack would be possible. While we stood at the door, suddenly a roaring artillery fire started, not from the East, but from the West. This was German artillery.

It was horrible. Everybody escaped down to the cellar. And now the most horrible night in Oberkirchen began. German and American soldiers

fought against each other in our village.

They first only used gun fire. We had to suffer. Our house got 3 artillery shots. The last one hit the cellar. "God protect us." The children cried in the cellar, they had mortar and dust in their eyes. We grown-ups were cramped in our prayers. "Help Holy Mary, it is time." The storm outside calmed down a bit. And now we tried, still surrounded by fighting noise, to get into the next cellar, (*the*) Henke's cellar.

It was hard work, small children had to be carried, also the severely ill Frau Holdricher, until we arrived at our asylum. But as the cellar walls already were damaged, after some hours we went back to Feldmanns cellar. This seemed to be the safest one. We were lucky that we had decided that, as the Henke house burnt down directly behind us.

### Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> April 1945

As in the night before, during the whole day we thought the end was close! We all had finished with our lives. Feldmann's cellar was empty; the whole family Feldmann had gone to the slate mine, which was in the distance of 10 minutes from the village. Now we wanted to go there too, but it was impossible to get through the hell outside. Impact followed impact.

We sat together with Frau Henke and child, Family Foerster, Family Wigelmann, Frau Elskamp with children and Frau Holdricher.

In the next cellar were 8 French men, which assisted us in the horrible hours in a touching and reliable manner.

Now the German attack followed with terrible noise. I could watch it through a tiny cellar window. I saw how four German tanks attacked. And

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(Oberkirchen...continued from page 8)

now the tank fighting began in the village. After some time two German tanks escaped in a hurry close to Feldmann's house. I was astonished that the house was not torn down.

Is it all over now? But at once two other tanks arrived at the village.

Additionally, I saw German soldiers on the pasture behind Feldmann's house. It was a big amount of soldiers lying there. How should that end?

Now the fighting on the road began.

The houses were besieged by Americans or Germans. Feldmann's house and cellar were first entered by German and then American soldiers.

Two Germans were determined to surrender in our cellar. After some hours of heaviest fighting between the houses it was quiet temporarily. The fighting in the streets was finished.

Like us, many other people have been sitting in the middle of the disputes (*fighting*).

Bakery Kersting hosted in their cellar three seriously injured soldiers, which were found on the road by Dueppe's daughters. In our cellar, also in Feldmann's house, thank God, there were no wounded people.

At 6 p.m. the Americans arrived to check house and cellar. They treated us roughly, as the fighting was going on and they had great losses. In front of Feldmann's house was a big American tank. Our weak nerves could hardly stand his roaring shots.

They answered "from our part there is no danger for you any more, but it would be better to go to the slate mine, as there are still many Germans in the surrounding mountains." After this announcement, we hiked with our heavy luggage towards the slate mine.

I will never forget the way to that place!!! Horrible shooting.

Right and left (*were*) dead German and American soldiers! The slate mine was 10 minutes from the village. On both sides of this way stood man beside man, American soldiers with guns, MG (*machine guns*).

We thought they would fire, but the Americans were humane. They gave us signs with their hands that we could pass. They were defending the lines against the German units at Lingelscheid.

Those 10 minutes were like (*an*) eternity. The slate mine then gave us the protection we longed for. In normal circumstances I would have never imagined that people can stay there between these rocks.

A long narrow way, filled with water, full of obscure fragments, totally dark, lead us about 100 meters into the hollow, which was overcrowded with Russians, French and Germans. The hollow was about 20-30 meters high, had a large expansion. Water leaked down from the

"ceiling". Thanks to the preparations of family Feldmann, we found asylum in one of the side hollows, where there only remained the Feldmann, Schwarz, Ude, Foerster and us. We were a big family. Here we had a first quiet night.

### Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> April 1945

The whole day we remained in the slate mine without seeing any daylight. We did not hear or see anything of the fighting. So it was no strain for our nerves, but it was bad for our health.

The children and we too had bad colds and stomach aches. Family Feldman, they are big farmers, were very caring and gave us food. Some men told us that the fighting in the mountains still continued. Civilians were killed, that the Americans had occupied all the houses (*and*) that inhabitants only were allowed to stay in the cellars. Big gangs of Polish and other foreign people were plundering the houses, those who had been brought there into Sauerland before. That was bad news and so we decided to find out the next morning if the rumours were true.

### Friday 6<sup>th</sup> April 1945

When we arrived at the village, we found Foerster's house occupied by Americans, as well as Feldmann and Kersting. Where should we go? In our trouble, we asked Herr Schuette, who gave us shelter. Frau Binz offered her room and then we housed with 6 persons in a tiny room. The artillery was still shooting, but it was only shots. But the detonation was so strong; we thought the small houses would break down.

### Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> April 1945

This day we tried to get into Foerster's house to take out some of the properties to save them from the long fingers of foreign people and the destruction of the Americans. The commander allowed (*us*) to take out some property. So we carried out in baskets the belongings of the sleeping room (our material, carpets, dresses and underwear) and some pickles to Schuette's house.

Thanks to the kindness of Frau Schuette, we had not been hungry. All in Schuette's house were provided for.

### Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> April 1945

This day we had already recovered a bit from the strain of the past days. The shooting of the artillery roared in our ears for the whole day, but our exhausted nerves got used to it.

After 8 days we changed our clothes and underwear for the first time. We felt like newly born. You could experience a lot during these days. The Americans were nice and decent. The huge supply of the Americans was like a sensation in Oberkirchen. The children were spoiled with chocolate and sweets. We could (*finally*) sleep very well that 8<sup>th</sup> April after a long time.

On April 5<sup>th</sup>, the Second Battalion/47<sup>th</sup> was replaced by the 99<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment and moved out of Oberkirchen to rejoin the 9<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division troops on their march toward the Elbe River and the end of the war. It is unknown what became of the author of the Oberkirchen Diary or her family.

Terry R. Barnhart is researching the Battle of Oberkirchen and is interested in hearing from any veteran who may have participated in the battle. He can be contacted at [REDACTED]



## Recollections Of World War Two

By Warren A. Robinson

B Company, 47th Infantry Regiment

It was during the battle for Ballenstedt, Germany, we found and liberated English prisoners and also captured several German soldiers. We were inspecting the groups of prisoners, both English and German and saw the English were poorly dressed, while the German prisoners were warmly dressed with topcoats etc. We lined up the English and German prisoners facing each other and told the English prisoners to take whatever clothing they wanted from the Germans. The English removed shirts, coats and pants including shoes, after the exchange we sent the German prisoners to the rear, many were barefoot and without pants, but the English were properly dressed and warm.

After the battle for Ballenstedt and the city was cleared of the enemy, our company commander sent out patrols into the neighboring mountains searching for additional enemy troops. Squad leader Pvt. Paul King led the patrol and being combat experienced sent a scout ahead as a precaution, with the squad strung out behind. Approximately twenty minutes later we saw the scout returning at a fast pace and breathlessly exclaimed, "there's a bunch of Germans about a mile into the wood!" With Pvt. King leading the squad, we headed in that direction prepared for battle.

Looking for the enemy, we saw a German soldier lying on the side of the mountain, not moving and lying as if dead. King seeing no movement instructed the squad to fire over the head of the lying German, he made no effort to move. Seeing no movement the medic said, perhaps he's wounded or dead and volunteered to go up and check. King gave his approval and the medic scaled the side of the mountain while we watched from below. As the medic approached we saw the German stand and appeared to be talking to the medic. After ten minutes the medic returned on a gallop and exclaimed that the German soldier informed him there was a company of Germans on the top of the mountain, and perhaps with proper negotiations they could be talked into surrendering.

Pvt. King turned and asked me to accompany him up the mountain leaving the balance of our squad behind. As we moved up the mountain, I informed King that as a child watching World War One movies, I understood that if we found high ranking German officers above, they will not consider surrendering to anyone with a lower rank than themselves because of their proud heritage, so I suggested that he play the role of a major and I, the part of a captain. Here we were, two privates going into negotiating a surrender with high ranking German officers.

After scaling the mountain and arriving at the German encampment, we found all their equipment intact and approximately 150 of the German enemy. King asked me to Irish charm the group. We started discussing and answering questions on what would happen to them if they surrendered and I like a fortuneteller, told them what they wanted to hear even if I stretched the truth a little. I lied to them telling them if they surrendered they would be furloughed home for a visit with their families and returned and processed out of the army. I found the Germans at this point to be as weary of the war as I. While the negotiations were going on the schnapps bottle was being passed around and realizing my survival depended on a clear head, I only had two swigs but King couldn't turn down the free booze. It appeared we were getting our way and having good results with our negotiations. Suddenly one of the officers spoke up and informed us of another company of Germans on a nearby mountain that also could be possibly talked into surrendering, and if we cared to he would guide and provide transportation to that site.

King and I walked off and discussed the situation and laid out our plans, he would travel over to the other mountain and I would remain with the initial group. Pvt. King climbed into a German jeep with a German driver and disappeared in a cloud of dust down a long winding mountainous road. After King's departure I asked if they, the Germans, had any spare pistols. After strapping on about six, I changed my mind about collecting them due to the weight.

About an hour after King left for the other mountain, I looked and saw the German jeep returning with only the German driver, he pulled up and said in broken English, "Your comrade says come with me." My first thought was they took King and shot him. At this point, I decided to go looking for King but I wanted some extra fire power. So I traveled down the mountain where the balance of our squad was waiting and traded my M1 rifle for a automatic weapon, I asked Pvt. Willard Houck to accompany me back up the mountain to stay with the first group while I went looking for King.

After making sure all was secure and in place, I climbed into the German jeep figuring if they planned on ambushing me, the first to go would be the German driver. I laid the automatic weapon across my lap aimed at the driver with my finger on the trigger.

After driving for about ten miles winding around the mountainous roads we came upon the German encampment, standing in the middle was King, surrounded by more Germans than the first group. King appeared to be arguing with them and knowing he had a belly of schnapps, I felt very concerned about the situation. As I dismounted from the German jeep, King walked up and said, see what you can do with them. I immediately saw King had too much to drink and I asked him, what seems to be the trouble. King said they want to give up but don't want to surrender their weapons and he wouldn't accept that. I then took King by the arm and asked him to take a walk with me and I then asked, what's the difference? He stubbornly answered, "Because I won't have it." I then reminded King how many Germans were around us, perhaps a couple hundred and in our group, only two. I then suggested giving the Germans whatever they wanted because if they decided not to surrender, two shots and it would be all over for us. After getting no response from King, I raised my voice telling him if he wasn't going to abide by their wishes I was leaving, this seemed to startle him and he turned and said, OK, you tell them to load up with their weapons. I returned to the Germans and informed the officers to tell their men to mount their vehicles with their weapons. King and I got into the German jeep leading the convoy back toward the first group. On arriving we brought up the remainder of our squad and assembled both companies and proceeded toward Ballenstedt. Our soldiers at the outpost on the edge of town, saw sixteen vehicles fully loaded with two to three hundred German soldiers coming off the mountain, their first impulse and thoughts were the Germans were counterattacking. They hit the ditches and prepared for battle, but soon saw we were standing on the front vehicle bumpers waving white flags and shouting, don't shoot, alerting them it was not the enemy attacking.

On dismounting and after explaining our actions to our company commander, he was so impressed he took the three of us to headquarters and announced that Houck and I would be awarded the Bronze Star, and the Silver Star for King because he was the squad leader.

Editor's Note: Reference *Eight Stars To Victory*, page 370, for an account of this action. Unfortunately, Pvt. Robinson and Pvt. Houck never received their Bronze Stars.

(V. Charles Stephens...continued from page 5)

Valparaiso Rotary Club, a Paul Harris Fellow +1, past Exalted Ruler Elks Lodge #500, life-long member of VFW Post 988, life-long member and past Vice-Commander American Legion Post 94, served as Staff Sergeant 9th Infantry Division, 7 Campaigns throughout North Africa, Sicily, Normandy, Northern France, Ardennes, Rhineland, and Central Europe. Charles was also a golfer, railroad fan, enjoyed reading, travel, music on a Hammond Organ, and had the Charles Stephens Band who played in the area. Survived by wife, Marilyn M. Stephens of Valparaiso, Ind. who he married on December 7, 1941; a nephew; three nieces.



Carl H. Winter  
1916 - 2011

### Cannon Company, 60th Infantry Regiment

*"As I ride along on this grand train the British have provided for us. It reminds me of a college football team on their way to the final training ground, after making the round robin of all the opposing teams of several states. They were victorious in each encounter, but the modest players never mentioned*

*their past scores. Now they are ready to play the champs for keeps. With all our spirit and courage put forth, we can be like the football players and win our final game. So let's go 9th and march on to victory and home. God bless our players.*

*Just a player.*

*Does anyone doubt we soldiers belong to the greatest teams of all times!"*

On Sunday morning the 15 May 2011, former S/Sgt. Carl Henry Winter, age 94, of the 9th Division's Cannon Company, 60th Infantry, joined the TAPS roll call. Carl served over 3 years with the 9th, from Fort Bragg to North Africa to Sicily. Then he billeted in Winchester, England before landing on Utah Beach in Normandy. From Normandy, he traveled across northern France to the Ardennes region of Belgium. He finished the drive through the Rhineland. He earned a Bronze Star along the way.

After the war, Carl was employed at Pfizer, Inc., where he worked in their Brooklyn plant as a tinsmith and welder. Eventually, he moved up to become a foreman in the Engineering department, retiring in 1979. He did well by collecting retirement (continued next column)

### MAIL CALL

Glen Gronseth



Ed Note: The following is the conclusion of the letter about contacting the Russians published in the Jan.-Feb.-Mar., 2011 issue.

Written by Cole Gronseth in 1987; CO M Company, 60th Inf. Regt.

Amongst the banter, singing, and frequent taking of a new friend over to Joe to ask what he said, I recall one funny event with Russ Snelling. A plate came by with what I thought were pickled herring. My Nordic tastes prevailed and I sampled some. They were not pickled - just pieces of raw fish. I passed this dish to Russ and said that it's been a long time since you had some good pickled herring. He so acknowledged and took a big bite only to discover the same about them as I had. He spat out the fish and turned to me saying, "(expletive) you, Gronseth, these are raw."

Stepping out of sequence here, at the second buffet/party held later that day, another plate of the same fish was passed. By now Russ had had plenty of schnapps and I said that these were really delicious, as I passed the plate to him. He promptly cleaned the plate and pronounced that he had never tasted better. Still later that afternoon when I crossed the river, I saw Russian soldiers throwing grenades upstream and netting more fish, so I now knew that the fish were at least fresh. It was the first that I knew that raw fish is quite a common buffet item in much of Europe.

Back to the bash, many were in attendance. The word was that they had gone back to the equivalent of Division level to allow the staff the honor (?) of meeting the Amerikanskis. (Some group of us to see, ratty, dirty, unpressed, etc.). They in turn had their dress uniforms, stiff epaulets and medals. (continued next column)

benefits for almost 32 years. He married Edith Wrage in 1946 and they were married for 51 years, before she passed away in 1997. They had a son and daughter.

During his retirement years, Carl often gave lectures to school children about his war experiences, believing that a firsthand experience of history was often necessary for the youth of America to understand the past. He enjoyed his days a member of the 9th. I remember the day, when my father introduced me to General Westmoreland at a West Point gathering. My father had done something for Westmoreland during the war and they reminisced about the incidence. I then shook hands with Westmoreland and swore that I would never wash my hands again. My father will be missed, but I know that he will be with his former buddies of the 9th that have preceded him to the roll call.

A loving son, John Winter.



### MAIL CALL

As daylight came we had pictures taken in front of Restaurant zur Elbe. Someone took pictures with my camera and Joe Youorski had some with his. Several years ago, Joe sent me some enlargements which I much appreciated. I also passed out a sheet of paper on which their autographs were inscribed, and I still have it.

I cannot recall any brilliant statements or thoughts that these meetings produced. One translation from Joe did stick with me. One or more of these men told that they were mostly farmers and wanted most to get back to that life. Also, they did not think that the adjustment between our countries would be easy: that there was always the event(s) which could bring us to war. This recall is not of a fancy late into retirement, as I have referred to that position even in letters sent home shortly after the fighting ceased.

Soon after the picture session we were told to go back to bed. This time I needed no encouragement. After perhaps an hour, we were again awakened. Each of us was assigned a barber and received a shave and haircut. Unique here was to be given slanted sideburns rather than square.

Now the third round of drinks and food came. My old buddy the PR man was the only one that I could remember from the previous two gatherings. The Russian brass this time included some from the equivalent of Corp, plus others who had missed out on the first two soirees. It was not (sic) getting to be fun.

The PR man again surfaced and suggested that I might like to see the Russians at war. I agreed and we left the party in some vehicle and headed to their lines which were closing on Berlin. I had a photo of a (continued on page 12)



(continued from page 11)

sign which showed "Nach Berlin 22 Kilometers". I repeat that I had it, but cannot at this time find it. I do have numerous negatives and it is possible that it is among these.

Anyway, we got up to where their artillery was firing and the thought of was again began to penetrate the booze that had accumulated. I suggested a halt and we all relieved ourselves by the roadside. A patrol came up and asked if we could interrogate a badly frightened German who looked the part of a library clerk. The PR buddy and I both used our limited vocabulary. We believed that by shouting that the extent of our word usage increased. It didn't but we gave that up. Better reason now began to sink in, and I said that it was necessary to return to make contact with our base.

I waved farewell at the restaurant and looked for Del Pembridge, Russ and Joe. They were not to be found. Since several of the Hosts were passed out, I guess that a similar fate had befallen them. I now decided to recross the river and see what had transpired there. For about an hour I scoured the town of Pratau for signs of our men and finally found one of the drivers who was sober to get his jeep underway. We headed back up the road to Raguin.

Several miles back we saw one of our light planes, an L-5 type spotter. He swooped down and landed on a field to the east side of the road. The pilot asked, "Where the hell have you been?" There was some worry about us as we had now been out of touch for two days. He thought that when he saw only one jeep that the others had run into real trouble.

He went to his plane to use the radio as I could not reach anyone on the #610 in the jeep. He found that he had the same problem but said that by taking off that he could be in radio contact with the height. It was his message relay that both told battalion about the contact and that the Russians wanted the visit with our comparable unit commanders.

I now returned to Pratau and told the driver to get the others ready for a return. Again I crossed the river to get Pembridge, Snelling and Yourski under way. Once more I marveled at the fact that we had crossed the river in darkness with only the catwalk to use.

Just how Joe made arrangements for the Russians to attend the meeting is beyond me. The actual date is not part of my memory. I do recall the pleasure of leading the column to the site of the joint meeting and the thrill of looking back at the ragtag assemblage following.

The "GO DEVIL" memo bulletin to which I earlier referred states that it was on the 28th, April, 1945. It tells that the official welcoming party, besides myself, consisted of Col. Van Houton, Col. Wilson, Maj. Snelling, Capt. Ryan, Lt. Yourski.

I was disappointed that we did not have the comparable buffet and refreshments that we had shared. Van Houton was like an old maid who sniffed booze on the breath of a hired man. Joe seemed able to reassure our guests.

My friend the Russian PR man, who had taunted me about the American soldier not being a good drinker now had his opportunity to show his power. I had radioed back to have my jeep brought forward. I knew that there was an English Imperial quart of White Horse Scotch in my duffel.

As soon as I could separate the two of us from the dullest party I'd known, I filled a tumbler with this Scotch and said, "Soldaten Getrinken". The poor man downed the entire glass. He turned to the wall and leaned on it while he gasped for breath. Tears came down his cheeks.

About fifteen minutes later he sought me out and stated, "Amerikanischer Soldaten ist gut getrinker." I think he then went to one of the vehicles in which his people came. It was the last of a short but great friendship.

In language today, I would describe Col. Van Houton as a nerd with his poor approach to the meeting. He had maps on a panel and grease pencils in hand. He wanted the Russians to give their positions and information about possible German locations. This likely was the West Point approach. I remember thinking that these people (the Russians) likely had little experience with maps as such. Also, they just wanted some drinks and songs to show what a grand thing had happened.

There were some casual exchanges of persona effects. They wanted side arms mostly. Mike was a Belgian 9mm on a Browning patent and was not for trade. Instead, I gave my compass in exchange for one of theirs, and it was a poor exchange for value - but I still have it, although the fluid leaked out years ago.

Throughout the years I have lamented that when I went forward toward Berlin that I didn't continue. I'm sure that except for downed plane crews, I'd have been the first uniformed GI into the city. That would have an interesting credit and my have helped produce a success in my political aspirations. In respect to the latter, I needed much help.

(continued next column)

For all practical purposes, this concludes my basic recall of the meeting with the Russians. Wars are of necessity fought by the young. It is too bad that the young do not at least have greater wisdom (perhaps if they did they would refuse to fight the wars) as it would have been great to have made a full and mature assessment of the impact of this meeting. I'm sure that on second thought that I would at least have gone into Berlin. Also I wish I'd made serious notes back at that time.

Michael D. Fraticelli

January 18, 2011

Hope all is well. Hope your Holidays were joyous. Sorry for not keeping in touch. I thought I'd give you an update on things.

I'm back to work, (part-time), an absolute necessity. It does take some time and energy away from the project, but I'm grateful to make the much-needed extra money. I put off knee surgery for now, would like to avoid the knife for as long as possible in order to keep moving forward with the project, and just tolerate the occasional pain.

I just got back from another five state trip to Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, & Western Pa. This time around, I interviewed the following veterans; William H. Nelson, Steubenville, Ohio. Bill was in K Company, 39th and saw action at Kasserine &

El Guettar. In 1993, he went to Tunisia with a few other 9th Div. veterans, (including Red Phillips). My connection to the Nelson family was most fruitful. Daughter Sharon and her 15 year old son, (who accompanied the veterans in 1993), actually shot amateur video and took stills of their most amazing trip. The men can be seen trying to recall their positions in the Hills of El

Guettar. Sharon copied the video for me, which was ready when I arrived at their home. I had a delicious home cooked New Year's dinner with them after the interview. I'll copy the video and photos for Red.

Next stop was with 93-year-old Wm J. Voller in River-side, Illinois. He was interviewed before, (as you may know), and appeared in "Patton 360". I enjoyed a tasty cup of home brewed coffee with Bill before I left. As with some of the men in the 'nineties club', it's amazing to see how they're still able to get around. Bill lost his wife last year, and wishes God would take him soon. While I was with Bill, I had him call Lou Prince. They were both in the 60th, and

shipped out on the George Clymer en route to North Africa. On the telephone they talked about 'Black Mike Kauffman', and other officers.

I went to Cincinnati last summer to interview Lou Prince. He and I are considering getting another interview together with 10th Panzer veteran, Professor Breitenberger in Athens, Ohio, (they're only 2 hours apart). They fought against each other in Thala North Africa 1943. This would be a unique opportunity to have these men meet each other. However, there's much to discuss, as I still need to convince the professor to such a meeting with another camera interview. Dr. Breitenberger is a private man. Nevertheless, I put them in touch with one another and their correspondence has been cordial. As always, the rest is up to me to make it happen.

(continued on page 13)

Next stop was a 're-visit' with Coast Guard veteran Robert Fraley, Grayslake, Illinois, who was actually in the lead boat with Major Oaks as they struggled their way through rough dangerous seas 160 miles from Algiers, (almost drowning before they were picked up). This revisit was especially poignant as a recent discovery of memorabilia put a positive connection to my father and Bob Fraley, as they were both in the flotilla of 24 landing boat crews. There were only 25 Coast Guardsmen among an all-Navy crew. Bob became quite emotional as he read his entry from a diary written 69 years ago from my father's book.

Next stop was back to Troy, Michigan, where I revisited Joe Barnett, 39th Fox Company. Since our last interview 2 years ago, Joe has suffered from severe PTS. He never really got over the stress from all eight campaigns. The worst for him was the Hürtgen Forest. He's currently in counseling at the local VA.

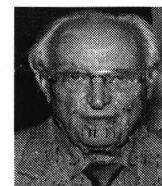
Then on my way back, (last stop), I interviewed 90 year old Bill Buemi in Cleveland. Bill was in the 47th and had no problem killing Germans or anyone else for that matter. His stories were vivid and graphic.

The total number in interviews has grown to almost 50, and includes men who served in the 39th, 47th, 60th, (infantry and artillery), Combat Engineers, and Headquarters Battalion. There's also a sprinkling of appearances from Navy & Army Historians, an Army Nurse who served in Tunisia, and a French North African-born civilian, (later a French Army Liaison), and sister-in-law to the late Wm. Maloney, Lt. in the 39th.

German veterans include: Professor Ernst Breitenberger, 10th Panzer veteran and Red's connection. Other Afrika-Korp veterans include: Rudolph Schneider, one of Rommel's personal drivers. His regiment served as Rommel's personal combat unit, and surprised the Americans at El Guettar. Rudolph's comrades include: Rudolph Nickol, (who witnessed his entire regiment wiped out by Americans at Gabes), Heinz Wünsche, (who was left for dead in the desert), and Horst Galle who had very interesting personal stories about Rommel and the futility of their efforts as they retreated. These veterans are among the last surviving Afrika-Korps in Germany.



Rudolph Schneider



Rudolph Nickol



Heinz Wünsche

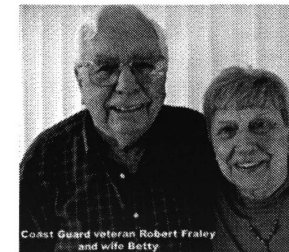


Horst Galle

The trip to Dresden occurred in late September thru early October. Although the experience was wonderful, like other trips to interview veterans, there was little down time. In fact I got quite sick from exhaustion when I returned home.

My discovery and acquaintance with German veteran Rudolph Schneider has been quite amazing. Since Dresden became reunified with Germany 20 years ago, Rudolph studied English as he wishes to communicate his stories about the war in North Africa. It was interesting to find out how he and his comrades felt about the war from the German point of view. Rudolph's personal combat experiences covered many battles from approximately 1941-43. At 89, he organizes a shrinking group of Afrika-Korps veterans. He more than likely fought against the 9th at El Guettar, and against the allies at Kasserine, Maknassy and other battles. Rommel's personal combat unit shrunk from 380 to less

(continued next column)



Coast Guard veteran Robert Fraley and wife Betty



Bill Buemi - 47th

than 50 who survived the North African Campaign, (Rudolph was one of them). He possesses hundreds of photographs, (which he snapped himself), and has the actual battle maps and compass used by Rommel through out North Africa.

The 9 day trip to Germany was filled with many tasks. My family gave me a monetary contribution which helped make the trip possible. Working alone, I had to bring special equipment for filming the veterans in my hotel room. I hired Rudolph's English teacher, (Annekatri Bach), who translated as we conducted the interviews. There's still much work to be done from the trip; approx. 25 hours of video to be edited and translated. I only wish I could include some of it for you to see. The German veterans I visited were not Nazi party members, only common soldiers, who believe in God. When I left, they remarked that they hoped I didn't feel they were Nazi's.

Other news: I had the opportunity to enjoy a visit with Gail Eisenhower and her fellow AWON friend, Sue Perko in early December. They were visiting Longwood Gardens, (about an hour from here). There's a possibility Gail will meet me sometime in Feb. at veteran Henry Shimkoski's house in Worcester, Mass.

I spoke to Red before Xmas. I gave him some details about the trip to Germany, and also about veteran Al Perna's recent visit with a local 9th Division reenactor group. Red suggested I pass all this information onto you. I realize both you and Red are very particular about what can be inserted in the newsletter. You may feel some of what I enclosed is not relevant for inclusion in the Octofoil. However, let me be clear; I was pleased to hear appreciation in Red's voice as he stated he would like to see some of this in the Octofoil. You're the editor, you'll have to decide. Al's family would love to see his story printed. In the materials enclosed, please note the connection with Matt Carroll, leader of a 9th Division reenactment group out here. I connected Al with Matt. In my opinion these fine young men are to be commended for their dedication to our WWII 9th Division veterans, and for helping preserve their stories. As with all reenactors I've met, they are 'Mini-Historians' and enjoy putting on 'Living History' events which illustrate many authentic displays. The guys are very helpful to me as I stage additional recreations. Please read Al's story about meeting these young men. Matt made several attempts to reach out to the reunion association. It would be nice to give his group some recognition. Please review all the photos on the disc enclosed. You can decide which ones are relevant. Thanks for your consideration

As I continue my search for 9th Division veterans whom I can reach, (the list is shrinking), I always mention the Octofoil Library Project in my travels. During my visits, I've seen and copied some rare photos and memorabilia. When you get time, can you please send me a copy of the library disc mentioned in the last issue?

More news; I was extremely fortunate to have received a substantial contribution from OWC. 'Other World Computing' is a company specializing in parts for older Mac computers. The CEO is the son of WWII veteran. The money will help; nevertheless this project continues to ride entirely on my shoulders. There is no reliable help available, as this is partly the reason for the lengthy completion time. The other reason is that I will not be satisfied until I can reach as many men as possible, (that time is approaching), as the story line continues to evolve. The most difficult part for me has always been, connecting then disconnecting, knowing I may never see them again.

Thankx for doing a great job with the Octofoil! That's enough from me for now...

Some contact information for you:

Matt Carroll - [redacted]

[www.9thdivision.com](http://www.9thdivision.com)

Signed, Mike Fraticelli



Al Perna

Last September I was introduced to Matt Carroll by Mike Fraticelli, and invited by Matt to participate in Historic Soldiers Weekend that was held on September 25 and 26 at Fort Mifflin, on the Delaware River a few miles from historic Philadelphia. It was a salute to all veterans for all the wars and conflicts

Fort Mifflin is a perfect venue for such an event. Originally built in 1771, it remains the only completely intact battlefield from the Revolutionary War.



When I arrived, I was enthusiastically greeted by Matt. Mr. Carroll directed me to join a group of volunteers some dressed in blue and gray Civil War attire, some wearing attire from World Wars I and II, donning American as well as German uniforms. There were three-cornered hats from

the Revolutionary War, and pictures from both the Korean and Vietnam conflicts. There was a WWII encampment portrayed. In other areas there were tents set up, weapons demonstrated, and vehicles on display. Lots of magazines were available for viewing and a band played military music.

The event is sponsored by a volunteer organization who host "living history" events around the tri-state area. The entire weekend was a salute to all veterans, to teach young people about the events of the war, and keep the veterans' memory alive.

Mr. Carroll informed me that his group has singled out the 9th Infantry Division to be honored for their significant contributions in World War II. In a building they had pictorial displays of the 9th Infantry Division's assistance in the Battle of the Bulge, North Africa, Sicily, Cherbourg Peninsula, and Normandy. They keep our veterans on pedestals. Matt's group, whose ages range from 16 to 60, come from Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Their mission is to honor the veterans and carry on their legacy through shows and events, like this one. They visit veterans at reunions and assisted care homes. They march in cadence in parades for Memorial Day and have served as pallbearers for veterans who have passed.

Matt explained that the volunteers were anxious to meet with me. Most of the day was spent meeting people who asked many questions about my experiences during the war. They were extremely interested in the stories I was telling and showed me great respect. The more I spoke, the more intently they listened. They asked me to return the next day, which I did. They thanked me for coming and remarked how grateful they were that I shared my stories with them. It was quite a weekend.

If you would like to have more information about this group, their website is: [www.9thdivision.com](http://www.9thdivision.com)

The 9th Infantry Division is also being remembered in a documentary about the invasion in North Africa, (still in progress), by filmmaker and World War II historian, Michael Fraticelli.

Michael D. Fraticelli

Email: [WW-II@comcast.net](mailto:WW-II@comcast.net)

Website: [www.ww2survivorstories.com](http://www.ww2survivorstories.com)

April 26, 2011

Hope you're well. Thank you for including the snapshots in the last Octofoil. Although I appreciated the effort, there was no email address, or link to my web site. I received an email from a son, (sons and daughters), who was obviously computer savvy, and put my name in a search engine which revealed my contact information. His inquiry indicated some questions/confusion to that regard.

And I noticed there was no mention of the trip to Germany to visit the Afrika-Korps veterans who fought against the 9th Division, or reference to Al Perna's visit to the 9th Division reenactment group. Perhaps this was due to lack of space, or just a difference of opinion as to the relevance of the material. Although it was a bit disappointing, I respect and appreciate your dedication to the 9th Division Association.

I'm happy to report that Red was extremely pleased with the rare video and photos I edited for him illustrating the 9th Division's trip to Tunisia in 1993. Red is particular about details so it's always gratifying to know that he values the unique stories, photos, and diary entries I've acquired from veterans across the country.

It's been a long and difficult road, but nothing is more important to me than preserving these stories. No matter what the cost, I will see this through.

My journeys have brought me closer to the men, and their families. In some cases, they've become my 'extended family'. Of course this makes it difficult to part, knowing I may never see them again.

After obtaining nearly 45 lengthy interviews, the final push is definitely approaching. I hope to get together with Gail Eisenhower on my way back to New York, and Massachusetts to interview Joseph Gurli, and possibly Arno Heller. Afterward, I hope to travel back to Indiana to interview George Minarik. Lastly, there could be one last plane trip to Kansas to interview Navy veteran Fred Atchison. Both Fred and Coast Guard veteran Robert Fraley knew my Dad. They were all in the landing craft which took a terrific pounding as they tried to get to Algiers November 7th-8th 1942. Fraley was in the lead boat with Oakes.

I realize you've got a lot on your mind as you prepare for New Orleans. In closing, (for clarification), would you please consider inserting my name, email address, and web site in the next newsletter explaining the accidental omission? I'd also appreciate it if you can mention as I'm winding down the effort; is there anyone else who would like to contact me?

Signed, Mike Fraticelli

cc: John Sabato

James F. Hart, Jr.

Thank you for your phone call and I apologize for not sending the \$20. It is enclosed. I am so happy that the next generation is taking over.

When I was ordered to England prior to D-Day I was at Camp Shanks, N.Y., a staging area for troops going to or returning from England. One evening they had a dance for nurses at the Officers Club. There I met Rose whom I later married. She was returning from England and was to be the operating room nurse on the new hospital ship *Thistle* which sailed between Charleston, S.C and Naples, Italy. We kept in contact and were married right after we were released. Unfortunately I lost her two years ago and strangely she passed away in Naples, Fla.

(continued on page 15)

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Henry G. "Red" Phillips, Association Historian

### (Greater New York Area...continued from page 7)

Tony relates his various WWII 9th Div. perilous experiences when he was a runner for the 47th Infantry despite his one nearly-blind eye.

The N.Y. Chapter wishes all Ninthmen and their families a happy and healthy summer

We offer our condolences to Joe Charvat on the loss of his wife, Betty.

On another sad note: John Winter reported that his father, long-time N.Y. Chapter member, former WWII 9th Div. artilleryman Carl Winter expired at age 94 on May 15, 2011, in Raleigh, North Carolina nursing home near his daughter Joyce. Carl had suffered for many years with bladder cancer. Our condolences to the Winter family.

Next meeting, Friday, September 16, 2011 at 1:00 p.m.

Marv Levy, Recording Secretary

### (James F. Hart...continued from page 14)

We have a summer home in Stone Harbor, N.J. Two blocks from our house is an American Legion Post. My boys put a plaque in her name on the front walk of the Post. When I saw that I had one for me put in along side of her.

In conversation with some Post members they asked if I would donate her uniform to the Legion. I agreed, also donated my uniform and copies of *The Octofoil* and the ship *Thistle* news form many years ago. I also donated a number of things I had accumulated while in the ETO

Signed James F. Hart



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Make check payable to: **The Ninth Infantry Division Association**

Send to: William Robey, \_\_\_\_\_

Rev June 2011

### Robert A. Watts

The board is doing a great job in keeping the 9th alive. I'm sending \$20 for a year of *The Octofoil* and the rest for the one's in the 34th Field Artillery "A" Battery as a "Tip of the Hat."

In March I called you about my Life Membership card but haven't received it yet. I've misplaced the card that I received when I joined in Germany in 1945, old age I guess.

Sorry I can't travel anymore having spinal stenosis is no fun, but the treatments help.

The reason I chose the 34th FA was because I was with them in England before joining the 47th Infantry, Cannon Co. at Winchester Barracks. I was with Cannon Co. longer but can't find anyone who was there.

I wish you all the best time in New Orleans and stay away from Bourbon Street.

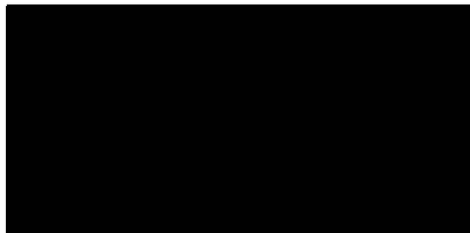
Signed, Robert A. Watts



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#### Charles Reagan

This picture was taken before they sailed to North Africa. On the left is Lt. Martin Shaughnessy, my brother. My mother was the Gold Star mother. The other Lt. we do not know.

My brother was killed March 11, 1945 after crossing at Remagen in Germany. Perhaps someone would remember the other Lt.

Signed, Charlie Reagan



#### Henry S. Geary French Legion of Honor Medal

Friday, June 17, 2011 marked another milestone for a 9th Infantry Division veteran. Henry S. Geary from Allentown, Pennsylvania was awarded the French Chevalier medal at ceremonies held at the French Embassy in Washington D.C. The French Ambassador presented "Hank" with his well deserved medal. Hank served in the 1st Platoon, L Company, 47th Infantry Regiment. A past president of The Ninth Infantry Division Association, he was elected at the 63rd annual reunion in Orlando, Florida. He served from August 24, 2008 to July 26, 2009. Congratulations Hank!

