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The Octofoil

9th Infantry Division Association

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1-1-2012

## The Octofoil, January/February/March 2012

Ninth Infantry Division Association

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### Recommended Citation

Ninth Infantry Division Association, "The Octofoil, January/February/March 2012" (2012). *The Octofoil*. 386.  
<https://crossworks.holycross.edu/octofoil/386>

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# The Octofoil

Jan.-Feb.-Mar.,  
2012

Volume LXVII, No. 1



President  
Joseph Maiale

## President's Message

This has certainly been a busy year. Most of you received my business transition letter dated February 13, 2012, where I made some immediate changes to personnel and method of payments to the association. Managing this crisis from Florida has been challenging to say the least, but I have some great help from the sons and daughters. They stepped up and without them we would not have been able to continue operations or have a reunion in August.

You are probably wondering what happened. All I can say at this time is the Prince George County Police Department in Maryland is conducting an investigation regarding the financial practices of the previous Secretary-Treasurer. Suffice it to say we are in serious financial trouble as a result.

Our new Provisional Treasurer has merged our association finances with the Sons and Daughters Auxiliary. Fortunately they had established a new bank account in August 2011 to meet their particular needs. For this reason all checks and money orders should be made payable to **The Ninth Infantry Division Association**. Please be sure to include the purpose of the check in the memo section, i.e. membership, memorial donation, Octofoil subscription and so on. This will be a great help keeping track of the various revenue sources.

I am looking forward to our reunion in August with great anticipation. Jane Mitchell and Theda Ray are doing an outstanding job planning our event and I know we will enjoy ourselves. We also intend to conduct some serious business by transferring the operations of the association to our descendants. Stay well and I look forward to your continued support during these trying times. Call me if you need further information at [REDACTED] until April 4, otherwise use [REDACTED]

Joe Maiale, President  
The Ninth Infantry Division Association

**67th ANNUAL REUNION PROGRAM**  
Sheraton Station Square Hotel  
300 W. Station Square Drive  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15219  
August 17, 18, 19, 2012

### Thursday, August 16, 2012

5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. - Registration-Hospitality Room: Woodlawn 1

### Friday, August 17, 2012

8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. - Registration-Hospitality Room: Woodlawn 1

2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. - Board of Governors Meeting: Edenburg Room

6:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. - Reception and Pittsburgh style dinner: Fountainview

### Saturday, August 18, 2012

7:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. - Breakfast: Waterfront Room

8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. - Registration-Hospitality Room: Woodlawn 1

9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. - Memorial Service (be seated by 9:15 a.m.): Brighton II-IV

10:30 a.m. to 11:30 - Group Photo: Brighton II-IV

11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. - Ladies Auxiliary Meeting: Brighton I

12:45 p.m. to 1:45 p.m. - Ladies Auxiliary Lunch: Trackside Restaurant

1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. - Association General Business: Edenburg Room

5:45 p.m. - Meet in hotel lobby for directions to Gateway Clipper dock

6:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. - Boarding time for the Princess

6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. - Cast-off, sail, buffet dinner, dance, and return to dock

### Sunday, August 19, 2012

8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. - Breakfast: Waterfront Room

8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. - Registration-Hospitality Room: Woodlawn 1

10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon - Sons & Daughters Auxiliary Meeting: Edenburg Room

12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m. - Board of Governors Meeting: Stoops Ferry

5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. - Banquet Reception with open bar: Reflections

6:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. - Guest Speaker: Major General James. A. Hoyer: Reflections

7:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. - Banquet Dinner: Reflections

### Monday, August 20, 2012

6:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. - Breakfast: Waterfront Room

8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon - Hospitality Room: Woodlawn 1

8:00 a.m. to ??? - Say goodbye, check out and head for home

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

### Inside this issue:

<i>The Ninety's Club</i>	2
<i>67th-2012 Reunion Update</i>	2
<i>Memorial Restoration</i>	3
<i>Tip of the Hat</i>	3
<i>Taps Sounded</i>	4
<i>The Million Dollar Wound</i>	6
<i>Chapter/Auxiliary News</i>	9
<i>History Road</i>	10

### 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 OCTOFOIL

The official publication of The Ninth Infantry Division Association Inc.. Published four times yearly, January - March; April - June; July - September; October - December. Material for publication must be received by the publisher according to the following schedule:

December 20 for the January publication  
March 20 for the April publication  
June 20 for the July publication  
September 20 for the October publication

One year subscription fee is twenty dollars (\$20.00) and must be sent to the publisher by check or money order made payable to:

**The Ninth Infantry Division Association.**

Send payment to: Publisher, The Octofoil  
2960 West 234th Street  
Torrance, CA 90505-4104  
Tel.: 310-534-3146  
Email: wgsauers@gmail.com

The Ninth Infantry Division Association Inc. is a registered 501(c)19 Veterans Organization of the Internal Revenue Code in a determination letter issued in January 1948. Donations are NOT tax deductible.

Volume LXVII, Number 1 January - March, 2012

## 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.

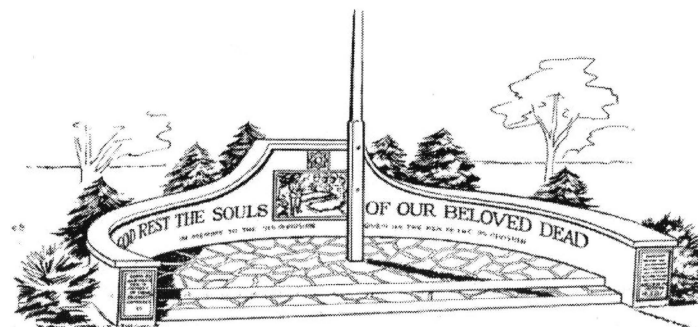
### New Ninety's Club Members



Clarence Ray (90)  
Penn Run, Pa.



Wilbert Goldsmith (90)  
West Hills, Calif.



### Friends of Father Connors Fund

The Friends of Father Connors Fund would like to thank the following for their generous donations:

Joseph Bergin, New London, N.H.  
Dr. Gordon Binder, Millbrae, Calif.  
John Rowe, Naperville, Ill.  
Henry Shimkoski, Worcester, Mass.  
Charles Reagan, North Reading, Mass.  
John Delmore, Billerica, Mass.  
Paul Schumacher, Selmer, Tenn.

Your contributions will help with the restoration of our beautiful memorial at Immaculate Conception Parish in Worcester, Mass. To date our fund balance is \$2,192.00.

Lauring Construction Company has submitted a bid for a complete restoration of the memorial. Lauring Construction is a local company that is approved by the Diocese of Worcester to perform all types of construction and restoration work on all the diocese property. They are well known in the area and have an excellent reputation for completing quality work on time. The total cost for a complete restoration is \$22,932.00. The work includes:

- Replace the light on the memorial wall
- Refinish all of the letters and remount them
- Refinish the bronze plaques at the end walls of the memorial
- Replace the flagpole rope and the gold globe at the top
- Replace the 5x8 flag
- Buff flagpole to bring back some shine to it
- Remove Plexiglas from 2 locations
- Power wash all masonry surfaces
- Reset approximately 3 walkway stones
- Repoint all mortar joints of the brick walls
- Cutout and replace ~ 100 brick at all cracked brick locations
- Cutout foundation below plaques and replace with bricks ~ 25 brick
- Cutout precast cap joints and recaulk
- Recoat/page precast cap with thoroseal
- Repair foundation cracks and parge exposed foundation walls
- Clean and repoint the stone risers
- Repoint all cracked mortar joints in the walkway
- Apply PD siloxane water repellent sealer to all masonry surfaces

We have a long way to go to fund this restoration work so please consider making a donation. Our goal is to complete this work in time for the 50th anniversary rededication ceremony planned for Sunday, November 11, 2012. We want this memorial to last another fifty years.

Make your donation checks/money orders payable to **The Ninth Infantry Division Association** and note in the memo section "Friends of Father Connors Fund." Send to: William Sauers, [redacted]

If you have questions about the project and its cost please call William at [redacted]

## 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 Sauers, Provisional Treasurer  
[redacted]

Susan Labaj in memory of her father Walter J. Labaj

Charles W. Becker in memory of Sgt. Arthur Clark, M Company, 39th Infantry Regiment

Herbert Stern in memory of Henry G. Phillips

Robert A. Watts in memory of Dan Quinn and Henry G. Phillips for their contributions to the success of *The Octofoil*

Paul Schumacher in memory of Jack Jewell

Casimir J. Pakisz in memory of Barthalemew Profancik

Nellie Niverth in memory of her husband Martin A. Niverth

### A Note from the Publisher

In his message President Maiale alluded to the association having experienced a serious financial setback. This has also affected *The Octofoil*. In my note to you published in the July-August-September, 2011 issue, I said the Board of Governors had voted at the reunion in New Orleans to transfer the operating budget for the newsletter to me. Unfortunately, as it turned out, insufficient funds were transferred from the previous Treasurer.

To continue producing this newsletter some cost saving measures are necessary.

First, this issue is twelve pages, not the usual sixteen. The next issue, April-May-June, 2012, to be published in July, will be eight pages. That issue will close out our fiscal year (2011 - 2012) ending June 30, 2012. The issue following the reunion, July-August-September, 2012, published in October, will be printed all black and white. The tradition of printing four pages of reunion pictures in color will be delayed for one year. Depending on revenues it is hoped we will return to the standard sixteen page format for fiscal year 2012 - 2013.

Second, the current financial crisis will require everyone to renew their subscriptions on or before July 1, 2012. Thank you to those subscribers who already sent their subscriptions using the new form (see page 11). Your subscriptions will be honored until June 30, 2013. Check the mailing label for current status.

I regret having to take these measures, but they are necessary to continue production of the newsletter. This newsletter was first published in May/June 1946 and has continued uninterrupted since then. Let's not let it fail. We have experienced a bump in the road; we will get over it and will continue with your loyal support.

If you are in doubt about your subscription status please call, write or email me as soon as possible. I welcome your feedback. This is your newsletter so keep sending those letters, photos, obituaries, and stories, anything you want to share with others.

Respectfully,  
William Sauers, Publisher/Editor  
[redacted]

### 67th - 2012 Reunion Update

Plans for the 67th reunion to be held in Pittsburgh, August 17 - 19, 2012 are coming along nicely. The reunion will be held at the beautiful Sheraton - Station Square Hotel located on the Monongahela River. Reservations for transportation from the Pittsburgh Airport to the hotel can be made at: [www.supershuttle.com](http://www.supershuttle.com) or call 800-258-2826. Be sure to enter discount code "9C5UD" to receive the discounted rate of \$40.00 round trip per person plus a fuel surcharge. The fuel surcharge is currently \$5.00 per person each way but fluctuates with gas prices, so could be more in August. For example, the total round trip cost for two people will be \$100.00. Parking in the Sheraton lot or the parking garage is \$18.00 per 24 hours or \$20.00 with in and out privileges. There are other Station Square lots that are less expensive if you don't mind walking a little further.

The Friday evening reception will be an informal function with local Western Pennsylvania fare being served. As usual, the Memorial Service will be held on Saturday morning followed by the group photo.

The Saturday night function includes a buffet dinner and dance on the Princess, a paddleboat in the Gateway Clipper Fleet. We will cruise all three of Pittsburgh's rivers, the Allegheny, Monongahela and the Ohio. The entrance to the Gateway Clipper dock is adjacent to our hotel, and no buses will be required. We will meet in the hotel lobby at 5:45 p.m. and walk to the dock to begin boarding at 6:00 p.m. Wheelchairs will be available for those who need assistance on the short walk. If you have any specific music requests, perhaps World War II era songs, please email them to Jane Mitchell at: [redacted] and they will be passed on to our DJ.

On Sunday evening, the banquet reception with an open bar will be from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. This year for our banquet, you will have three entree choices, prime rib, chicken admiral (stuffed chicken breast) or vegetarian. Also, we are having some very special guests. Major General James A. Hoyer will be our honored speaker. Major General Hoyer assumed his duties as The Adjutant General, West Virginia Joint Forces Headquarters-West Virginia on February 1, 2011. Music will be provided for the evening by members of the U.S. Army Band.

The reunion will come to an end after breakfast on Monday morning. We hope to see all of you for an exciting reunion in Pittsburgh!

Jane Mitchell and Theda Ray  
Reunion Committee Co-chairs  
[redacted]



## 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

Winston E. "Gene" Campbell Jr. H Co., 60th Inf. Regt.	Oreste Russo L Co., 47th Inf. Regt.
Col. William Ewald (Retired) S-2, 39th Inf. Regt.	Frank J. Volpa
Marvin W. Levy A Co., 60th Inf. Regt.	Harvey T. Warner M Co., 60th Inf. Regt.

## TAPS LETTERS

### Anthony R. DeRobertis



Above is a picture of my friend, Marvin Levy (center) and his wife Barbara. We were at a Greater New York Chapter memorial picnic and barbecue. The picture was taken on May 19, 1990. As our Recording Secretary, Marv always kept us informed on the minutes of our meetings, schedules for memorial services at the VA National Cemetery and time and location for our Christmas dinners. He always brought a cake to our meetings for any member who was celebrating a birthday that month.

I was informed of the passing of Marv by my buddy, Joe Killen. I just mailed a letter to Marv that I would be attending this year's Memorial Day service in New York. Two of my buddies made TAPS this year, Oreste Russo and now Marv Levy. I will miss them both. They are truly, America's best.

Signed, Anthony R. DeRobertis

I am writing to you about my friend, Oreste Russo. He was a member of the New York Chapter. He was a combat rifleman and later became a Medic for L Company, 47th Regiment. He received the Bronze Star, Silver Star and Purple Heart medals. I was with him at the Battle of the Bulge and on the March 7th, 1945 crossing of the Remagen Bridge. We were the first unit to cross the bridge and it did occur on the seventh of March.

During one of the many battles we fought, I reported that we had two men stranded in a snow filled field. One of the men was wounded. Through heavy fire, I managed to get back to my unit. Oreste wanted to run right out and save the men. I had to

(continued next column)

hold him back because if he did that, he would surely have gotten himself killed. Fortunately, at night, we were able to bring the men back to safety.

After the war I met Oreste while riding in the subway in New York City. I was going to the first 9th Division reunion. Oreste sat down opposite me. He looked up and said, "Tony, you are dead! You were killed in action!" I am listed in the 9th Division book as KIA. I told Oreste that my parents had received the KIA telegram. L Company's First Sergeant and the Company Clerk made the error. When I returned back to the states, I could not find my home. My family had moved. I ran into my sister while she was shopping on Steinway Street in Astoria. I soon discovered that since my family thought I was dead, they had given away all of my clothing.

Oreste and I, along with our wives, went to our first 9th Division reunion together at the Pines in the Catskill Mountains in upstate New York. We also went to many other reunions together and were active in the New York Chapter of the 9th Division. We also remembered those who made the ultimate sacrifice on Memorial Day ceremonies which took place in Farmingdale, Long Island. We also enjoyed the barbecues.

Oreste was a school teacher and a lawyer. He helped me get the legal papers for our adopted granddaughter, Nicole. Once, our friend, Clarence Ray and his wife Pearl went to his house for a visit. Oreste phoned me to come to his house. Then we all jumped into his big car with our wives and went out for a lobster dinner. The restaurant had an enormous tank by the front door that was filled with very large lobsters. We all had a great time together. Our wives, both named Rose became good friends. Oreste would always insist on picking up the tab for our many outings.

Oreste eventually retired in Florida. We always kept in touch with long phone conversations. A few days ago, I received the phone call that my good friend had died. Holy Rood Cemetery in Long Island, New York, near Eisenhower Park is his final resting place. He was a remarkable man and a very dear friend.

Signed, Anthony R. DeRobertis, L Company Runner

## TAPS OBITUARIES



### Winston Eugene "Gene" Campbell, Jr. 1923 - 2012

#### H Company, 60th Infantry Regiment

Winston Eugene "Gene" Campbell, Jr., 88, died on Wednesday, January 4, 2012, at Arbor Ridge at Kenersville with his wife by his side. Gene was born in Saint Petersburg, Florida on November 21, 1923, a son to the late Winston Eugene and Georgia White Campbell. Gene was raised in McCormick, South Carolina and later joined the U.S. Army. He married his first wife and the mother of his children, who preceded him in death, Mary John Foster on November 28, 1950. Gene was a veteran of WWII and of the Korean War, serving eight months in a German prison camp, and retired as a CWO III in 1965 after 20 years of service. Gene settled in Archdale after retiring from the military. He became a member of First Baptist Church in Archdale serving as a deacon, Sunday school teacher of the Young Adults Class, finance director, and serving in any capacity that the church needed him. He was employed with Life of Virginia until his retirement in 1987. He married his second wife who also preceded him in death, Quenell Loflin Campbell. Gene was also a member of the American Legion Post #36 in Kernersville and of the 9th Infantry Division Association. He also enjoyed golfing, dancing, fishing, and hunting. On September 13, 1997 he married the former, Bonnie Grubbs who survives of the home. Gene was currently a member of Saint Andrews Presbyterian Church. He was also preceded in death by two sisters. He was a loving husband, father, grandfather, great grandfather, and brother and will be truly missed. He is also survived by five daughters; two step sons; three sisters; 13 grandchildren, 12 great grandchildren, 4 step-grandchildren, and 4 step-great grandchildren; and many special friends at Saint Andrews.



### Col. William Ewald (Retired) 1920 - 2011

#### S-2 Intelligence Officer, 39th Inf. Regt.

Col. William Ewald (Retired) of Cadillac, died Sunday, Christmas morning, December 25, 2011, at his home. He had been a heart patient for several years. He was 91.

He was known throughout the area for his many years as a trapper following his retirement from the U.S. Army.

He was born in Kassel, Germany, on November 28, 1920, to Frieda (Schaberick) Ewald and Fritz Ewald. He immigrated to the United States (New Jersey) with his parents and older brother in 1928.

He enlisted in the New Jersey National Guard (112th Field Artillery-horse drawn) in 1938. He quickly advanced to the rank of First Sergeant. He became a naturalized citizen in 1942 just before his commissioning as a Second Lieutenant of Infantry.

His service during World War II was in the European Theater, where he was assigned to the 9th Infantry Division, 39th Regiment as the S-2 Intelligence Officer (Interrogation). During this period, he distinguished himself in hostile action and was awarded two Silver Stars.

He met his wife, First Lieutenant Regina Bourget, a Cadillac native, during a hospital stay in the 98th Army General Hospital, where she was assigned and was his nurse. They were married in September 1946 in Germany.

Following World War II, Maj. Ewald attended the U.S. Army Airborne School. In 1952, he was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and given the command of the 3rd Battalion, 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division. Thereafter, he volunteered for the newly formed 10th Special Forces Group

(continued next column)

(Green Berets) and was assigned as the first director of Field Exercises for the 10th SFG (Abn) in Bad Tolz, Germany. Upon his return from Germany, he attended the Army Command and General Staff College before being assigned as the US Advisor to the Royal Thai Infantry School, Lopburi, Thailand. In 1960, he was assigned as the first commander of the Mobile Training Team (MTT) to train South Vietnamese officers and noncommissioned officers as cadre for the Vietnamese Ranger companies.

Following his MTT tour of duty in Vietnam and other assignment with various Army Headquarter, including the Director of the Special Force Unconventional Warfare Department, he was assigned to CINCPAC Hqs, Hawaii. In 1968, he volunteered for duty in Vietnam and was assigned as the senior advisor to the 21st Vietnamese Division in Ca Mau. During this period, he again distinguished himself in hostile actions and was awarded a third Silver Star for gallantry and promoted to Colonel. His final duty assignment was as advisor to the 300th Military Police Command in Livonia, Mich. He retired from active duty with a total of over 30 years of service.



### Marvin W. Levy 1925 - 2012

#### A Company, 60th Infantry Regiment

Marvin W. Levy - born February 21, 1925. Formerly of Merrick, N.Y., passed away on January 13, 2012. Survived by his devoted wife, best friend and love of his life of 54 years, Barbara, loving father of Alan and (Kathleen), Madelaine Wooster, and Suzanne Levy, adoring grandfather to Laurie, Tracy and Andrew Wooster. Marvin was a famed cartoonist, art director, and decorated World War II veteran as well as an active member of The Ninth Infantry Division Association. We will miss the sparkle in his eye, the talent in his hands and the kindness in his soul.



### Frank J. Volpa 1923 - 2011

#### A Company, 47th Infantry Regiment

Frank J. Volpa was born in November 1923, and passed away peacefully Saturday, November 26, 2011.

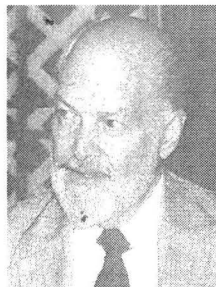
Frank served in the U.S. Army and fought in World War II, where he earned the Bronze Star and Purple Heart medals.

In 1949, he married the love of his life, Barbara Jean Klassen. They resided in Fresno, Calif., until they retired to Morro Bay in 1980.

Frank enjoyed life by the sea and many visits with his grandchildren during the summer.

Frank in survived by his wife of 62 years, Barbara; two sons; one daughter; seven grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren.





Donald Stibitz  
circa 2004

## The Million Dollar Wound

By Donald Stibitz

Reprinted by permission of the author. Part One of a seven part series.

**Prelude to the story:** The battle for the Hürtgen Forest was a huge conflict and encompassed a large area and many armies with many casualties. Since the battle took place in an area with a large surrounding population, there is considerable interest in the results of that conflict even today. Much of the spoils of war still remain on the ground to be seen if one knows where to look. To help those with this interest, are Ron van Rijt and Albert Trostorf who act as guides and can be seen wandering through the forest with an entourage of curious visitors. To their credit, this is done without charge and in appreciation for those who gave so much that the citizens of the area live in freedom today. But finding good new stories, after so many years and with so few survivors left to participate, has not deterred Ron and Albert, in their search. In this case, Ron has queried the author of this story, Donald

Stibitz quite a few times and the results are now available in this story.

**Prelude to the battle:** In April of 1944 and at age 18, Donald Stibitz enlisted in the Army Air Force. The previous year he had spent in the Civilian Military Training Corp so he arrived in the service with some previous training. He was sent to Camp Shelby, Mississippi just as the 69th Infantry Division formed so his previous experience was needed and he was made an instructor. At that time, however, there was a great need for pilots, bombardiers and navigators in the Army Air Force so he was sent to Miami Beach in December for testing and orientation while waiting for assignment to flight school. After six weeks of waiting, the need apparently had disappeared and now what the Army needed was not apparent to Donald so he volunteered for the Ranger or Paratroopers and took the physical to see if he was qualified. This got him a trip to Lowery Colorado and the Air Force Armored Gunnery School where he ended up working in the Duty Office while waiting for the next training class to start. After another six weeks wait, this school was also closed to new classes so it was back to the 69th where he had started.

Now the 69th had a new program in effect: this was to bring in troops from other outfits for a two week intensive and toughening up course. This consisted of an 11 mile march (completed in two hours or less) that started before reveille then to breakfast at 8:00 a.m. After that, it was squad, platoon and battalion tactical problems. On Friday night at 12:00 a.m., it was a 25 mile march that had to be completed in eight hours. After four months of this, all four of the Platoon Sergeants asked to be sent overseas. How much worse could it be?

But for Don, it had at least been a good learning experience. "If I hadn't been in both, I would never have known the differences in the treatment of between the two branches of service that I had been in," relates Don. "As an example," relates Don, "at Lowery Field if you had a pass to Denver and got back at 2:00 a.m., and went to the mess hall, which was open 24 hours a day, you could get yourself some eggs over medium, fried potatoes, toast and coffee. In the Infantry, mess was open for breakfast, lunch, dinner and closed all other times. If you were ten minutes late, you got no meal."

**And now to the battle:** After spending seventeen months stateside, I arrived in Europe in August of 1944 and in short order was sent to the Hürtgen Forest finally to get into action.

About October 6, I was assigned to an outpost between the Kall Trail and the Germeter-Hürtgen road, close enough to the road to observe any movement. I was told we had to capture that road because it was a main supply route from Bonn. The forest at that area was unbelievably dark. The tops of the trees almost completely blocked out the sky and sun. At night we had to tie a light cord from one foxhole to the next one so we could locate the other guys so they could take the next two hour watch.

On one occasion when it was time to awaken the next guy who had the watch, I found the cord had been severed by shell-fire. We called these shells the screaming me-me's. The Germans fired these shells periodically day and night just to harass us and it did a pretty good job of doing that. I was crawling around on the ground trying to find the next person who had the watch. There were four other guys out there and I could not find any one of them.

At this time the shelling got very heavy. As luck would have it, I couldn't even get back to my own foxhole. I did find a hole though and dove into it. The stench was so bad and I found that I had landed on a rotting corpse. I flew out of the hole and spent the rest of that night trying to get some sleep lying out in the open without any protection. I was very lucky to make it through that night.

On the morning of October 14, we were told to move down to the Kall Trail and head east to join the rest of I Company. There we were to assault the same position that we had attacked once before and the place where two of our companies had been completely wiped out.

The 60th's objective at this time was to attack from the Mausbach and Schevenhuetten area to capture Germeter and Vossenach. To drive over the high ground beyond the Germeter-Hürtgen road at Raffelsbrand, and then drive on to protect the Roer dams. The fear was that the Germans would blow the dams and flood the whole Roer Valley which could prolong the war considerably.

We joined the rest of our company about 150 or 200 yards along the trail. From that point we started toward the Germeter-Hürtgen road. Shortly after, we started up a slight incline between rows of trees that looked almost like a trail. I heard a shot and I looked at my buddy on my left as he turned toward me. He was just about three feet away. His shirt was open to his chest area and I could see a red dot appear in the center of his chest. The red dot opened to about 3/8th's of an inch and he moaned and went down. I was certain he was killed because of where he was hit. It had to come from a sniper. We continued and no other shots were fired but the shelling started again.

About 40 yards further, we saw an open field about 50 yards square. Our guys were setting up two 60 millimeter mortars on each side of the field. It takes a minute to set up a mortar after they reach their position. But before they could get the first round off they were both hit by German mortars. The Germans had to be zeroed in on those locations before we ever got there.

In the attack before us there was a slight dug out area that was ideal. We pushed ahead to the road, formed a skirmish line, told to fix bayonets and ordered to move across the road. On the other side I observed a large open field about 150 yards wide and about 75 yards deep to a wall of trees and dense brush. About 25 yards later all hell broke loose. Beside the machine pistols and machine guns to the right and left cross firing up and down our whole line, one round hit my M1 and destroyed it, knocking it out my hands. I picked up another M1, there were plenty laying around from those who were killed or wounded. We were all pumping hundreds and hundreds of rounds towards the woods.

(continued on page 7)

(continued from page 6)

After another 20 yards, the first sign of the enemy was a number of potato mashers being thrown toward us. I looked to my right and saw a very young looking soldier grab his M1 by the end of the barrel, with the butt on the ground. He put his finger over the top, pulled the trigger, dropped the rifle and ran toward the rear. At that time I realized I was about the only one still standing. I hugged the ground and noticed the slightest movement set off the machine guns, traversing the whole front again. A squad leader about 8 feet to the left, suddenly jumped up and began firing. I screamed at him to stay down. What could a few do against god know, how many were against us. I was shocked as I saw him get hit 3 or 4 times and a tracer must have hit him in the head. Smoke poured out of his head, while he was still standing and fired a couple of shots before he went down. It could have been an hour or more before I decided to move back. I crawled to the right for 15 or 20 yards to check if there were still any alive. I then went to the left to do the same. I found one still alive. I ask if he was hit. He didn't say anything. I started to search for a wound, then he whispered, "not hit." I told him to stay low and follow me out. I started to crawl away, looked back and he hadn't moved. I had to try to pull him and he finally moved on his own. We got back across the road and a platoon leader from L Company came running up and asked if we were okay. I told him I was from I Company and the guy with me was from L Company. He then told me that I was the only survivor from I Company and only 11 from L Company. I checked my equipment the next morning and found a bullet hole in my canteen and two in my pack. In all these years I can never forget how lucky I was that day.

We were getting between 60 and 80 replacements a day to regroup. The third assault on this position was on the 17th. I use this date because that was the date the military has me listed as wounded. We approached the road this time with two tanks. They stopped about 30 yards from the road to wait for the order to shove off and claimed they could not shut down the engines. They claimed that when they get that hot, they just keep running. That sound really brought in one hell of a mortar barrage and god knows what else on us. The order came. Skirmish line, fix bayonets. I was kneeling and ready to cross and there was a deafening tree burst and I felt a heavy hit in the back of my leg a little bit above the joint. I reached around the back and felt a nice pocket about 1 and 1/2 inches wide and 4 inches deep. I tried to stand and could do it, made me very happy. I made it to the aid station and they immediately put me on a stretcher packed it and bandaged it and put me and another on the top of the jeep rigged to carry stretchers. Eventually arrived at Division evacuation hospital.

I was taken to a hospital train and was on my way to a big hospital in Paris. That really felt wonderful. Some decent food, very good care. I realized after I looked around, how much better off than many of the other patients. It didn't last long. About 1 and 1/2 to 2 weeks later I was put on a train again and ended up in a field hospital, somewhere in western France, in a tent with about 20 others. They wouldn't allow me to walk. After some days went by, they started to put very hot wet compresses over the wound for 24 hours. The nurse would come around about every 30 minutes and put boiling water on the compress. I was then wheeled to an operating tent under heavy sedation and then given a shot of sodium pentothal. They were able to stretch it far enough after all the hot soaks to stitch it shut. The doctor told me I had a million dollar wound and would be out of action for six months. I was sent to rehab later not far from Cherbourg. While there I was put on a job building log roads and walkways. The Battle of the Bulge came along and instead of six months, they emptied the rehab and sent everyone that could walk, and even some with crutches, and some with their arms in a sling, back to their outfits.

We did have Christmas dinner before we left the next day. At dinner I was having a conversation with the person next to me. I ask him what outfit he was with. He said, "I Company, 60th." I asked what kind of wound he had. He opened his shirt and showed me his scar. I almost fell off my seat. Here was the guy, shot in the middle of the chest. The very same guy that was beside me when he got hit. How wonderful. I couldn't believe it. I was so sure he had been killed. To end this. That position was attacked 5 times before it was taken.

### Hürtgen Forest: Three main Infantry Divisions

#### Casualties:

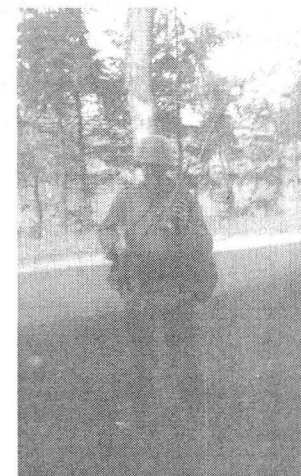
9th Division - September 13 to October 26, 1944 - 3,836

28th Division - October 27 to November 20, 1944 - 3,611

4th Division - November 6 to December 8, 1944 - 5,260

Total casualties - 99 days - 12,707

Dates for my two attacks on this position are based on the date I received a Bronze Star, October 12, 1944, and the date I was wounded, October 17, 1944.



Donald Stibitz armed with a Thompson submachine gun with three 45 caliber cartridge magazines, a walkie-talkie, extra ammo in the right hand bag, and gas mask in the left hand bag. He also carried two hand grenades, two shoulder holsters with pistols, and a 9 inch knife in his boot.



Hürtgen Forest Pillbox

Part Two to be continued in next issue.



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**NUMBER 71**

Editor: Winston G. Ramsey  
 Published by  
**Battle of Britain International Ltd.**  
 Church House, Church Street,  
 Bournemouth, Dorset BH1 3JA, England  
 Telephone: 0204 8324 8823  
 Fax: 0204 8259 7549  
 Email: [info@bbi.co.uk](mailto:info@bbi.co.uk)  
 Website: [www.battleofbritain.co.uk](http://www.battleofbritain.co.uk)  
 Distributed by  
 Hargreaves Ltd.,  
 200, Great Portland Street,  
 London W1M 6BB  
 After the Battle is published quarterly on  
 the 15th of February, May, August and November.  
 The subscription price (which includes postage)  
 for institutions is £100 per annum in advance.  
 Letters for the Editor should be sent to  
 Letters Publishing Services Ltd, 190 17th  
 Floor, 250 West 57th Street, New York, NY  
 10019-3008  
 Telephone: 212 512 2000  
 Fax: 212 512 2001  
 Email: [info@lps.com](mailto:info@lps.com)  
 Website: [www.lps.com](http://www.lps.com)  
 The subscription price for individuals is £25.00  
 per annum in advance.  
 Canadian Distribution: **Winston G. Ramsey**  
 Vancouver Publishing Ltd, Box 273,  
 1000 West Broadway, Vancouver, BC V6C 2E1  
 Telephone: 604 681 2222  
 Fax: 604 681 2223  
 Email: [info@wpr.com](mailto:info@wpr.com)  
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 Telephone: 61 61 437 7202 Fax: 61 61 437 5760  
 Email: [info@wpr.com.au](mailto:info@wpr.com.au)  
 Website: [www.wpr.com.au](http://www.wpr.com.au)  
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## CONTENTS

THE BATTLE OF THE HURTGEN FOREST	1
50 YEARS AGO The Liberation of Addis Ababa	36
IT HAPPENED HERE Carinhall Revisited	42

Front Cover: Carinhell — Hermann Göring's retreat in former East German territory — was not only his private mansion but a shrine to his first wife Carin. Here with Hitler he emerges from her underground tomb (see back cover for comparison).

**Centre Page:** Left: The Kall Trail, still much the same now as in 1944 when the US 28th Division used it in their abortive attempt to capture Schmidt — one of the costliest actions of the Second World War. Right: Relics of the battle of Hürtgenwald.

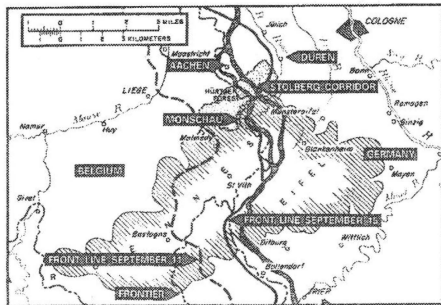
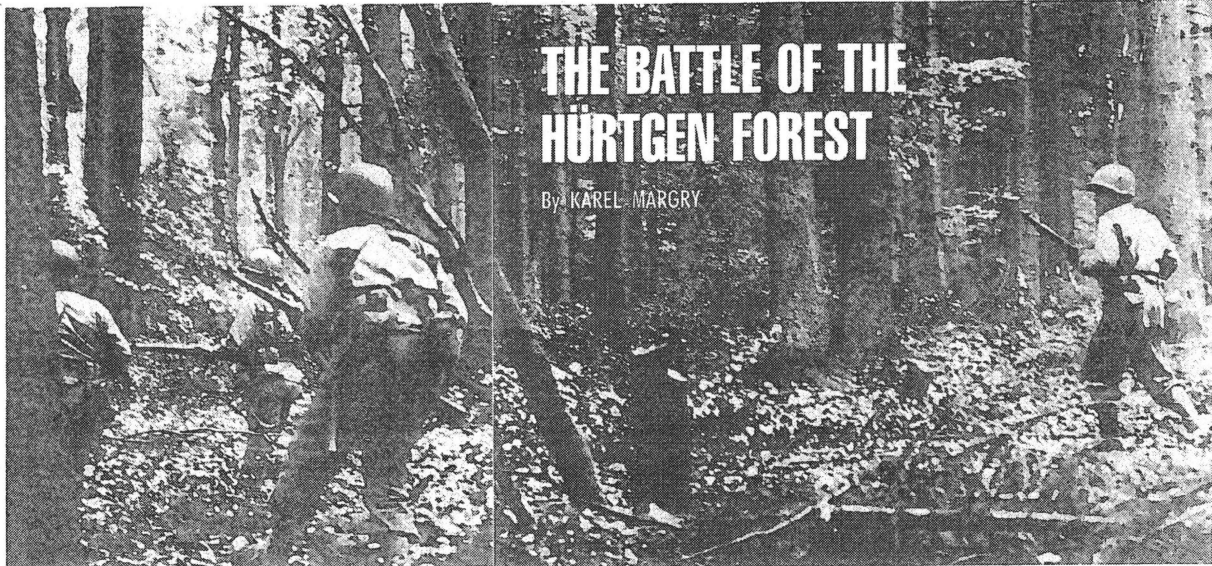
**Back Cover:** Her former resting place dismantled (top), Carin Göring now at last at peace having been returned to her family plot in Lovö Cemetery in Sweden.

**Dedication:** Courtney West would like to dedicate his story on Carinhall to Caja, Carin Goring's great-niece.

**COMPETITION**  
Winners of our Winston Churchill caption competition (Issue No. 70): Robert Chapman of Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk; John Cook, Nottingham; and Michael Hill of Bournemouth.

## COMPETITION

Winners of our Winston Churchill caption competition (Issue No. 70): Robert Chapman of Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk; John Cook, Nottingham; and Michael Hill of Bournemouth.



On September 10 the first Allied patrol to cross the German frontier did so just south of Aachen (see *After the Battle No. 42*). At that time the front line (dotted) lay in front of the Siegfried Line — Germany's West Wall. Astride the Line south of the city lay a deep belt of forest — the Hürtgenwald — through which the Americans launched their attack on September 13. The bloody battle lasted three months, sucking in more and more men from both sides. By December 15, just as the major part of the Hürtgen Forest had been cleared (solid line), Hitler launched his counter-blow through the Ardennes, halting any further American advance for a month.

Stretching north-east from the Belgian-German border, the Hürtgen Forest covers an area of about fifty square miles within the triangle formed by the towns of Aachen, Monschau and Düren. Technically, it embraces three forests, the Roettgen, Wenusau and Hürtgen Forests, but it was the name Hürtgen Forest which stuck in the minds of Allied and German soldiers who fought there. As the northernmost part of the mountainous Eifel region, it is, broadly speaking, one big wooded plateau, sliced into ridges by numerous streams. At its eastern end, this plateau drops down sharply in what is called the Roer plain, the flanking of which was the last battle of the Eifel. (The Roer, or Rur, is not to be confused with the Ruhr river east of the Rhine.)

Right through the heart of the forest, two creeks, the Weisser Weh and the Roter Weh, flow northwards to join in the Wolse river, which then continues north-eastwards to the village of Schenkenhütte. From here, the Roter, the Weisser, the Roer, the Kall river, cuts its way through a deep gorge. Of the ridges created by these watercourses, the three main ones lie side by side and run in a north-easterly direction. Most villages are to be found on the slopes of the ridges, and only a few on the area either flanking the spurs of the ridges or the valleys below. In the north is the Hunlich ridge, running from the village of Schenkenhütte in Langevelde and with Hämlich in the north-east. In the centre lies the ridge of the Hunlich ridge by the Wehle river, lies the Gernerter-Hürtgen-Kleinhau ridge, enclosed on all sides by impenetrable woods. From this

'If anybody says he knew where he was in the forest, he's a liar,' said a battalion commander. 'Under a dense curtain of rain-heavy fir branches, across a spongy cushion of wet brown droppings from the firs, a man moved cautiously from one tree trunk to another. Each step might be his last. Even if the spewings of the burg burg that might erupt at any moment from deep within the trees happened to miss you, it caught the man beside you, or the man six paces to the right or eight paces to the left. Next time you might be the one.' Charles B. MacDonald: *The Battle of the Huertgen Forest*. (US Army)

ridge, the smaller spurs stick out southwards, the first from Gernertel to Voesenack, the second from Kleinhaub to Brandenberg and Bergstein. In the south, across the Kali river from Voesenack, lies the broad Lammersdorf-Schmidt ridge. All of these two ridges and the smaller spurs play a prominent role in the coming battle.

For a drive on the Roer with the west,

[illegible]

push straight through the forest, but persisted in doing so for three months? The reason was a purely negative one: to deny the forest to the enemy as a base from which he could counter-attack the Allied drive on the Roer and Rhine. Apart from that, the US planners could see little else to gain from the forest — no war industry, no important road net.

However, in doing so, they overlooked the one vitally important objective which the forest shielded, the seven reservoir dams which were regularly regulated the water level of the Roer river. The two principal ones were the Schwammeneau Dam and the Uffelt Dam, both lying south-east of Schmidt. If the Germans blew these dams, the resulting flood would wipe out any force trying to cross the river downstream. Yet, for a long time, the Americans planned their attacks without taking the dams into account. It was not until very late in the fighting, in the second half of November, that their planners began to take them into account. The Americans began to plan to blow the dams on the Roer. As the official US Army historian said, the Roer Dams were 'the neglected objective' of the Hürtgen campaign.

**FLORIDA CHAPTER**



Emil De Donato

proximately 600 persons. About 70% are season ticket holders leaving the balance for the general public. This issue of *The Octofoil* will probably be in your hands around April 8. That gives those of you who might not have received the mailing in time to join us. [REDACTED] Any order received after April 16, 2012 is subject to box office availability.

The Day's Inn motel is located directly opposite the Silver Springs Glass Bottom Boats Association. Take any one of the North and South major roads and exit at SR 40 (also known as Silver Springs Blvd.). If coming from the east coast on I-95 exit at SR 40 in Ormond Beach and go approximately 60 miles on SR 40 west to Silver Springs. If coming from the central or western areas of Florida, exit on SR 40 and proceed east on SR 40 to Silver Springs. It is approximately 11 miles from I-75 going on SR 40 east, aka Silver Springs Blvd., to Day's Inn motel in Silver Springs, Florida.

**A Tribute to Paul Crumb:** When you see Paul Crumb at the Florida Chapter reunion in May, please give him a warm hand shake and pat on the back for his role in World War II. Andy Fillmore, correspondent with the Ocala Star Banner, wrote an in-depth article in the February 23 issue of the Banner describing Paul's participation in the Battle of the Bulge and the crossing of the Remagen bridge. His service began at 18 in 1942 just before his high school graduation. After basic training, he was sent to Nova Scotia then to Liverpool, England where he was assigned to Company K, 47th Infantry. In December 1944, he was fighting in the bitter cold condition of the Battle of the Bulge. It was here he was wounded by shrapnel and earned his first Purple Heart. He spent several weeks getting patched up before returning to Company K. Then in March he was wounded for the second time in the battle of the Remagen Bridgehead where he was wounded in a leg. Although wounded, he was able to carry a buddy wounded soldier out of the line of fire. It was during this action that Paul received his second Purple Heart and the Bronze Star for his actions. After discharge, Paul worked as a rural Post Office carrier near Ithaca, New York. Paul and his wife, Eunice, have two daughter and two sons. In 2009, Paul went on the Honor Flight from Ocala to Washington, D.C. to visit the WWII Memorial. His sons, Ross and Paul II met their father and spent a few hours together. We salute you Paul and thank you for your service.

Joyce Munger, age 87, passed away on Christmas Day, December 25, 2011. In a phone conversation with her husband, Charles, Joyce had a problem with her heart and complications of the stomach. Charles and Joyce were married 69 years and have 6 grown children. She was laid to rest in the Sarasota National Cemetery. Condolences may be sent to Charles Munger, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] May her soul rest in peace.

Reminder: We would like to hear from you to update our membership roster. So will you please return the order form in the envelope supplied with either your check or a note stating if you have moved or wish to be dropped from the roster.

Thank you.

Emil J. De Donato,

Our annual meeting of the Ladies Auxiliary will be in August in Pittsburgh at the reunion hotel. In conjunction with the meeting, there will be an informal luncheon where you will be able to select your choice of lunch from several options and pay individually. We thank Jane Mitchell who lives in the Pittsburgh area for arranging the lunch details with the hotel. Please let me know (Roz - see contact info below) if you are planning to attend. Time of the meeting/



Rosalyn Gross  
President

luncheon will be in the reunion program.

Raffle: Jeanette Taylor and Glenda Baswell are organizing the Ladies Auxiliary raffle, our major fundraiser, for the Pittsburgh meeting. They are asking each member of the Ladies Auxiliary to supply one raffle item for the auction. Please bring an item that can easily be packed in a suitcase for plane travel.

Annual 2012 Dues: \$5.00 per year. If you have not paid your annual dues, please send a \$5.00 check to our Treasurer:

Judy Goldsmith

Hope to see you all in Pittsburgh - and don't forget your raffle item!

Roz Gross, President  
Ladies Auxiliary



History Road  
By Jeremiah Murphy

This article appeared in the Boston Globe, November 10, 1981  
Thank you to John Delmore for providing a copy to The Octofoil

They were mostly late-middle-aged men and they gathered early Sunday morning in the thin November sunshine and waited for Father Edward Connors to arrive.

There were about 200 men and they stood in front of the Grove street fire station here and chatted and joked. Many were paunchy and most had thin gray hair or were bald. Then Father Connors arrived. He is 76 and tall, but a little stooped now. All the men seemed very glad to see him. He looked tired and old, but he still joked and laughed, so everything was all right again.

Then Tom Boyle of Somerville called out in a sergeant's stern voice: "All right, we're all set! Let's move it!" The Worcester Brass Band played "The Washington Post March" and the drums sounded first as they turned onto Grove street.

Then it was time for the men to march, time for the World War II veterans of the famous 9th Infantry Division to march again in an annual memorial service for the 4571 division members who had been killed in action so long ago on battlefields across North Africa and Europe. The Ecumenical Service was started in 1946 by Father Connors and Sunday marked the 36th consecutive year that it had been held here.

Something happened to those men when they began to march together again, and it was beautiful to see. The talking had stopped and each man had pulled his stomach in a little and squared his shoulders and held his head up high, marching along with pride. Father Connors was in the second row. He is their leader.

There is an athletic field next to the fire station and two teams of young fellows in their early 20s were playing touch football. I was tempted to run over to those young guys and say, "Hey, listen! See those old guys marching down there? That's the 9th Infantry Division from World War II and they were combat soldiers, all of them - not clerks or chauffeurs or Hollywood GIs, but the real thing. They were soldiers and they fought and far too many of their pals - thousands of them - were killed. It was men like them who paid in blood and sadness for the freedom too many of you young guys take for granted today, because absolutely nothing is free in this life. You have to pay a price and..."

They would not have believed me anyway. They would have probably figured that I was another crazy old guy wandering around. So instead, I watched the veterans march along and there were Larry McLaughlin from Wakefield and Mack Umansky from Florida and Dick Hall from Dallas and Herb Olsen for Randolph and...Olsen was 19 when his twin brother was killed at Normandy in 1944. They had both served in the 9th Division. And there were Eddie McGrath of Marshfield and Ronnie Murphy of Scituate, who had grown up in the Depression years in Cambridge. They were drafted in February 1941, before the war started for America ("Goodbye Dear, I'll Be Back in a Year") but it was five long years and eight campaigns before they came home for good.

And there was Fred D'Amore of East Boston, who has attended every memorial service for 36 years. But most of all there was Father Connors, with his weathered face, raspy voice and humorous one-liners. The night before, I had listened at a party while the men of the 9th Infantry had spoken with love and admiration for the retired pastor of the Immaculate Conception Church here, where the memorial services were held.

The men were from different faiths and different backgrounds, but they all are linked forever with Father Connors who was their chaplain during those years in North Africa and Sicily and Normandy, the Ardennes, the Bulge and finally across the Rhine and into Germany itself.



Photo courtesy of Susan Steiner

Tom Boyle told how Father Connors had walked three-quarters of a mile alone at dusk through a mine field, with Germans dug in on the left, to celebrate Mass for Capt. Paul Lynch's isolated I Company before they went into battle. Lynch and many of his men were killed the next morning.

You meet memorable people while working for newspapers, but Father Connors, Holy Cross '27, is right near the top of my list. He said these men are his "family" and have been for almost 40 years now. But the other morning he looked tired and with mock seriousness explained, "I sang the Wabash Blues' too many times last night (at the party). Somebody had to liven up this old bunch." So on Sunday, a tiny segment of the old 9th Infantry from 38 states briefly marched together again. Thirty-nine years ago to the day they had gone ashore in North Africa to begin the long and costly battle to rid the world of a dreadful evil - Hitler, and all he represented.

Although the shadows of time now grow longer for these men, the memory of their service to their country will warm their nights until the day they die.

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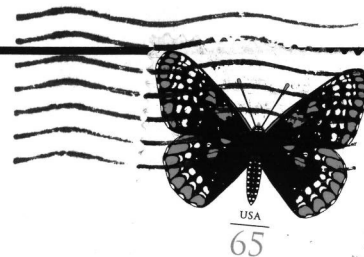
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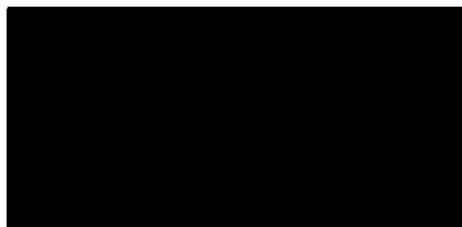
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