

THE ARDENNES * THE RHINELAND * CENTRAL EUROPE

The CUB

PUBLISHED BY AND FOR

*The Veterans of the
106th INFANTRY
DIVISION*

of the
GOLDEN LION

Vol 55 - No. 3

APR - MAY - JUN 1999

53rd Annual Reunion Information in Centerfold



John Schaffner (589/A) in American Jeep owned by the Conservation Vehicles Group, Belgium.

Here he is in the jeep outside Bizory, northeast of the Mardasson Monument

See story of the Schaffner, Gates and Ford's, trip to England, France and Belgium on page 12.

The CUB

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St Paul, MN - Agent: John P. Kline, Editor*

Membership fees include CUB subscription.

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Editorial matter and photos

John P. Kline - CUB Editor

11 Harold Drive, Burnsville, MN 55337-2786

612-890-3155 - jpk@mm.com

Business matters, deaths, address changes:

Gordon Pinney - Adjutant

60 Pinney Road, Whitney, NE 69367-2587

308-665-1785

Memorial matters and inquiries:

Dr John G. Robb - Memorial Chairman

238 Devore Dr., Meadville, PA 16355

814-333-6364

Membership dues, Historical items:

Sherod Collins - Treasurer/Historian

448 Monroe Trace, Kennesaw, GA 30144

770-928-3207

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520-722-6016 - jaswet@jumo.com

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205-491-3409

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448 Monroe Trace, Kennesaw, GA 30144
770-928-3207

John P. Kline, 423/M ('2000)
11 Harold Drive, Burnsville, MN 55337-2786
612-890-3155 - jpk@mm.com

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Col. Earl Valenstein US (Ret), 81st Eng/B ('2001)
5737 Bar Neck Rd., Cambridge, MD 21613
410-228-0716 - eagle@shoren.net

Zimand, Gerald P., 422/D ('2001)
101 Joseph Street, New Hyde Parke, NY 11040
NY: 516-354-4778 FL: 561-732-3832

Joseph P. Maloney, 424/HQ ('2002)
1120 Warren Ave, Arnold, PA 15068
412-335-6104 - maloney@salesgiver.com

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904-789-4692 - dspark@magicnet.net

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605 Northside Dr. Enterprise, AL 36330
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This quarter I'd like you to meet your second vice president and membership chairman.

Those of you who served in D Co., 424th, need no introduction to Marion Ray as you keep in constant contact with him through his publication "The Bugle", which he has produced on a quarterly basis for the last three years. As a publication it is a gem and is partly responsible for the increase in D Company 106th Assoc. Members.

Marion was born in West Frankfort, IL, but soon after moved to Alton where he attended both grade and high schools. He had an older brother (5 years) and an older sister (9 years). While the age differences necessarily separated the three children growing up, his sister was proud of Marion's WWII accomplishments, keeping a scrap book covering his wartime exploits.

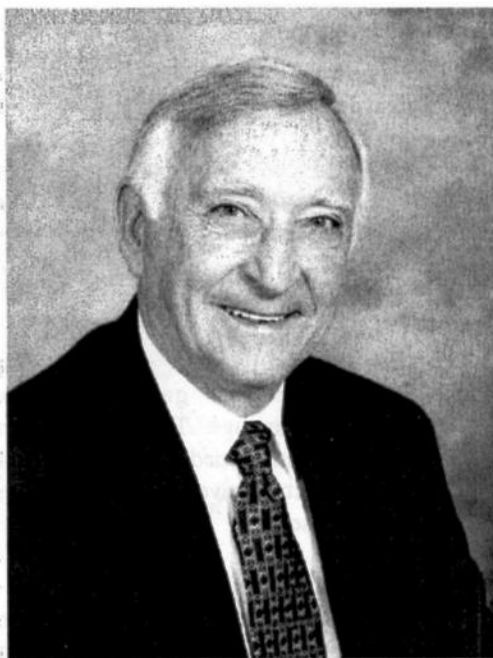
Thirty some members of his high school graduating class were inducted into the Army in March of 1943, with about 25 going to Ft. Jackson to help start up the 106th Infantry Division. Marion had shined on the high school rifle team, so of course the Army assigned him to a machine gun squad in a heavy weapons company. At Atterbury he was promoted to Sergeant and squad leader.

Overseas his battalion was placed in reserve but came up on the line at Winterspelt on Dec. 16. On the morning of the 17th, he and his Section Sergeant were taken prisoner. Marion's experiences as a POW would fill a book - from camp to camp, box cars and forced marches. He was "liberated" by the Russians, and after waiting more than two weeks, he and seven others took off with a German horse and wagon, making it back to the U.S. Army in four days.

He went back to civilian life, completed his machinist's apprenticeship, and decided that wasn't how he wanted to spend the rest of his life.

He rejoined the Army, in the reserves, (here again a book could be written) after attending many officer's schools and attaining the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and Artillery Battalion Commander, he retired after 28 years in the Reserves. During this period he was engaged in sales work which took him to the eastern U.S. where his two daughters and grandchildren live today. His first wife, mother of his two daughters, died some years ago. He is now married to Francis, who had four sons by a previous marriage, so they have a large family. He is back geographically to his roots near Alton.

The Association is grateful to have such an energetic membership chairman, and second vice-president. Marion has done much already and we look forward to his future accomplishments in corraling new members and associates.



John A. Swett, President 1998-1999
106th Infantry Division Association
"H" Company, 423rd Infantry Regiment
10691 E Northcrest Drive
Tucson, AZ 85748
520-722-6016

John Swett, President 106th Inf Div Association

"Let us now praise famous men..." The Bible does a great deal of praising famous persons. The conviction seems to be that in so doing there will be some source of good and growth for ourselves.

The end of May brings Memorial Day. One way that Memorial Day can speak to new generations is if those who bear yesterday's medals can also be today's models.

Remembering past battles certainly brings back recollections of gallantry, valor, commitment and courage. The qualities were clearly evident during armed combat. They testify to the striking reality of every man's willingness to sacrifice life itself.

Some of the famous men... the heroes... praised in the Bible were also mighty warriors. They faced incredible odds and took terrifying risks for God's sake or for the cause of good versus evil. But that's a pretty good description of our generation's warriors also.... Some of whom have no memorial, bear no medals, perished as though they had never been.

But he still see them in our times of recollection, and remember them and praise them each year as Memorial Day is observed. Sometimes we feel saddened and feel that the world has been cheated because it will never know the stories of their valor that we could tell. But we're not sure that today wants to hear about heroes of yesterday.

I once conducted a serious group exercise in which everyone was asked to complete the sentence, "The one thing I would like people to remember about me is....." A very penetrating exercise!

What would you like people to remember? Medals surely! But models more importantly still.

On Memorial Day let our present lives speak of faith and loyalty, of integrity and courage...those very values for which great men have always been praised...those very same values for which many of our comrades perished.

Prayer: Lord, we come to you remembering deeds of courage carried out on behalf of all of us, remembering the terrible fear that once stalked the earth that we and so many others were able to vanquish. Let our hearts fill, O God, with thankfulness for the freedom that we enjoy, purchased at such great cost. Let our hearts overflow with gratitude for this great nation in which we live. May our memories of comrades who have gone before us be rich and holy. May our own lives be worthy of every sacrifice they have made. and may we model day by day each and every virtue that was theirs. Amen.



Chaplain

Dr. Duncan Trueman, 424/AT

29 Overhill Lane, Warwick NY 10990

914-986-6376

It seems that since I finally retired, that I have less time to complete my many projects. The most important being the layout and production of *The CUB* magazine.

This issue is no different. I've had a busy time the last few weeks. Most recently traveling to Atlanta, Georgia to visit with Sherod Collins. My friend and the Association treasurer. This opportunity came when I received an invitation from a former ASTP student who attended the University of Alabama for a six month period in 1943-44. We had taken our Basic Training at Camp Wheeler, Georgia. Then most of us were shipped to the U of Alabama to train in "Basic Engineering," presumably to help rebuild after the war.

The Stateside training divisions, like the 106th, were ripped of soldiers as replacements to the divisions that were to land on the European Continent. The ASTP Program, for all practical purposes was dis-banded and there were over 400 soldiers shipped from the U of Alabama, to replace some of those POE replacements that had been taken from the 106th. We, from the ASTP program at the U of Alabama, arrived on 28 March 1944, just before most of you came into the Camp from Tennessee Maneuvers.

A few weeks ago I received an invitation from one of the former World War II ASTP students, to attend an informal get-to-gather of ASTP students at the University of Alabama. I visited with Sherod Collins, as a guest at his home, on 9-10 of April. He and I drove to Tuscaloosa, Alabama on the 11th. It worked out well. I was alone and had an extra bed at the hotel. We enjoyed visiting with the former ASTP students, took a tour of the campus. There was, naturally, nothing left of the old barracks, but we enjoyed viewing the campus and standing in front of "Denny Chimes" on the Campus quadrangle where we used to "formup" every evening in front of the library. There were several there that were in my barracks. It was great to visit after 55 years. Some of them went to the South Pacific as "engineers." There were 18 ASTP vets in attendance. Six 106th vets in attendance. Sherod Collins was not in the program, just



John Kline, 423/M, editor, *The CUB*
Photo 1943 - Camp Wheeler, GA Basic Training
Past-President 1997-98
106th Infantry Division Association
e-mail: jpk@mm.com
<http://www.mm.com/user/jpk>

along as my guest; myself, 423/M; Don Cooley, 423/HQ 1BN; Weldon Lane, 423/HQ 2BN; Skip Friedman, 422 - I failed to get his unit; Jim Donnini, 423/HQ 2BN. I was pleased that Bob Meeker and Tom Kelley were there, they were among those that went to the South Pacific. At Camp Wheeler these two were in the same squad with me. Sherod drove me back to Atlanta Airport and I returned home on the 13th of April - GREAT TIME!!

A Great Story

John Schaffner, 589/A has furnished us with a great story for this *CUB*.

He, John Gatens, 589/AS and David Ford, an Associate member, traveled to London, then on to France and Belgium.

John's story is one that you will not put down, once you start reading it.

Thanks John, you should start writing as a profession..... See Story on page 12

53rd Annual Reunion Committee Report - IMPORTANT !!!

Russell Villwock, Reunion Chairman

To the members attending the 53rd Reunion in Schaumburg, Illinois September 1-5, 1999. The reunion committee has put together a program which I hope will please those attending.

Your registration fee includes ALL sit down BREAKFASTS. The WELCOME party, which will consist of HORS D'OEUVRES, with a CASH BAR, cookies, coffee and tea. The hospitality room will have snacks and beverages. The Friday luncheons, and Saturday night BANQUET, with a CASH BAR. A farewell breakfast on Sunday. Check the program for dates and times, of all activities.

This year, we will try something different. There will be a VIDEO company at the reunion, that will tape interviews of your memories, of your time in the service, and of your present day life, also, awards, speeches and the Memorial Service. The tape will be about two hours long. The cost will be \$31.95 including shipping and handling. There will be no obligation to purchase it, but what a memory to have for those attending, and also for those not in attendance.

All tours are optional, but I think they will round out your stay in the WINDY CITY of CHICAGO!!!

For those not going on tours, there will be shopping at WOODFIELD MALL, which is just across from the hotel, and has over 400 stores. Featuring NORDSTROMS, MARSHALL FIELD'S, PENNEY'S, SEARS and LORD & TAYLOR. The hotel has a complimentary mini van, for those needing transportation to and from the Mall.

You can also use the hotel pools, indoor and outdoor, and a fully equipped fitness center, or just plain RELAX.

Send in your registration as soon as possible, to GUARANTEE your attendance. NOTE The hotel reservation cut off is AUGUST 11, 1999. The registration cut off is AUGUST 14, 1999. There will be a refund for those making a reservation, and not being able to attend at the last moment, due to illness, or other emergencies.

With hopes for a good attendance, the committee has ordered good weather, GOD WILLING!!! HAVE A SAFE TRIP TO SCHAUMBURG

REMOVE THE REGISTRATION PAPERS FROM THE CENTERFOLD OF THIS CUB - COMPLETE THE HOTEL REGISTRATION AND SEND IT TO THEM or make a telephone call as instructed. COMPLETE THE 53rd ANNUAL REUNION REGISTRATION and send it to Russell Villwock, Reunion Chairman - the address is on the application...

VIDEOS of the 53rd Annual Reunion will be made available from Raines Video Productions

A professional video tape will be made of the reunion in Schaumburg, Illinois. The videographer will conduct short interviews with many veterans, talking about their experiences in WWII and their lives since. In addition, videotape will include coverage of all the major events of the reunion. The videotape is then edited with music from the 1940's. And will be available for \$31.95 including postage and handling. If you have any questions, or wish to order a videotape call 1-800-654-8277. Tapes can also be ordered by mailing payment to:

Ranies Video Productions
180 Golf Club Road, Ste. 157
Pleasant Hill, CA 94523

IMPORTANT - IMPORTANT CHANGES OF ADDRESS

PLEASE, Please, if you move send me a change of address. There are far too many CUBs returned because the editor did not receive a change of address. This cost money. The original cost of mailing plus a First Class mail charge.

PLEASE, PLEASE remember to notify the ADJUTANT, EDITOR or TREASURER of changes of address. It wouldn't hurt you snow birds to do the same. See inside front cover for addresses for the Adjutant, Treasurer and Editor, as well as others..... J Kline, editor

**The CUB
PASSES in REVIEW:**

This 496 page, four color laminated cover, book - for you new members - has been a best seller since 1991. It is crammed with information about the Division, interesting stories from CUBs published since 1946 through mid-1991. Over 2,300 printed. It would help to conserve the history of the 106th Infantry Division if you would purchase copies of the book and place them in your local library. If you do, please paste a sticker on the inside cover to tell the people where it came from.

Another good location for the book is in the library of your local Veteran's Assistance Medical Center. Or as a gift to that favorite counselor who meets with you in a POW peer group, or in a Combat Soldier group.

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records

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JAN - FEB - MAR 1999 CUB

Ervin Szpek, Jr	10
son of Ervin, Sr 423/I	
Truman Christian (424/D)	25
Leon Kerns (424/D)	25

**MEMBERS
SINCE LAST CUB**

NEW: 30
REINSTATED: 11

OLD CUBS, Memorabilia

I receive requests for copies of old CUBs often. I appreciate those of you that have sent me your old CUBs, some from the family of deceased members, some from current members who wish to share. Thank you all.....

Received since last CUB mailing...

Robert Bredlinger (423/HQ)
Gordon Grantham (423/M)
Joe Kramer (423/HQ 3Bn)
R.J. Malueg (423/HQ 1bn)

From AG International Markets - NOTE: I lost the note that came with this packet - Can't identify the sender. Please step forward - SORRY...

If I missed any of you, my apologies, please drop me a note and I will list your name in the next CUB I can always use old CUBs for new members and Carlisle Barracks Museum.J Kline, editor

ERROR and APOLGIES...

Corrections to past articles

In Vol 54- No.4- July-Aug-Sept 199, page 17. The text under **MCMULLEN, CHARLES D. 422/D** should have been under the name of **LANKFORD, JOSEPH J. 422/HQ.** My apologies to both veterans. J. Kline, editor

In the Jan-Feb-Mar 1999 issue under New Members, page 38, second column. **James Wout** and **Ronald Kloosterboer** were shown as living in Belgium. It should be **Holland** or **Netherlands**.

Also in Jan-Feb-Mar 1999, page 37, left column: Cram's middle initial is "B" and the telephone number should have been 603-293-4445- this is his summer address. His winter address is 3210 Fauna St, Sarasota, FL 34235. Phone 941-955-5170. At least I had his winter phone number right.

Glenn Lockenvitz, West Milford, NJ, says, "In the February CUB I was shown as an Associate member, I was in fact a member of the **106th RECON TROOP**."

Gentlemen, I apologize. That section of the CUB was replete with small mistakes. The end result was that it prompted me to buy a new

computer. Now that doesn't cure all mistakes, but my old machine was having a hard time handling my publishing program and for some reason that one article was scrambled. Addresses became names, what was to be bold was not bold, etc. I also updated my publishing program to handle Windows 98 - that may have been the culprit. My error was in not catching the mistakes. Thanks for drawing these to my attention. J Kline, editor

From Jacques Bloch 422/K:

John, I read with interest in the Jan-Feb-Mar 1999 CUB "Front & Center" of the Remembrances of a Long Trip by **Charles Reeber** (page 6). I too returned to the USA on the U.S.S. Washington in May '45, after being liberated from Stalag XIB, Fallingb. And I also went to the German storage building outside camp where I picked up several bottles of 4711 Cologne, which I brought home as presents for my mother and sister.

John, I always enjoy reading the CUB; keep up the good work. *Jacques....*

THE MEN WHO CARE

The men who hold dominion for their short hour
and go their good or evil ways with power,

brutal or benign, over life on earth,

do not reign by happenstance or birth.

Master and slave are cast from life's same stuff;
but battles are won by those who care enough.

BEFORE THE
VETERANS DIE
by
Dale R. Carver



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742 Druid Circle
Baton Rouge, LA 70808
504-767-3111

Dear Mr. John Kline

I became an Associate member when my husband passed away in December of 1996. I enjoy reading and looking at the pictures in *The CUB*.

I want to order one of *The CUB of the Golden Lion: PASSES in REVIEW* for my local library. I don't want to part with the one I have at home.

By the way, I my name was omitted from the photo of the Fort Jackson Mini-Reunion on page 29 of the Jan-Feb-Mar 1999 CUB. I am the first one on the second row.

Lucille K. Williams

Sorry Lucille. Hope that people read this and recognize you. Thanks for the order of the book for the local library. We have very few left and it would be nice if more of them went to libraries. John Kline, editor...

Life Member, Charles E. Garns 424/H writes on Mini-Reunions:

John,

Please add the Northern Ohio December 16th meetings to your list of Mini-Reunions.

We've been meeting for the last 35 years. Currently we meet on the 1st Sunday of December at the Elyria Holiday Inn. Fourteen of us were there last December 6 and plan to be there again on December 5, 1999.

Anyone interested please contact:

Vivian McCullough

685 Roberts Street

Sheffield Lake, Ohio 44054

Phone: 440-949-5517

Thank Chuck. Nice information to have. Send us a photo of this one. J. Kline, editor

Life Member, Roy Burmeister 589/B writes:

I was listed as a new member in the May 1998 CUB. A couple of corrections are in order on page 22. I graduated from Bucknell University, not Bushnell, which may become my last resting place as it is a VA Cemetery in Florida. There was a mis-spelling of Edward Lukezych and Ralph Strader's names. They shared the ordeal in IX-B then IX-A where we were interned.

My closest buddy in Service is JOHN C. RAIN and he is the member responsible for my joining the Association after all these years. He has sent to me past issues of *The CUB* as well as other information.

I do want to stress that I recognize the great service you are and have done to further the cause of the 106th. It may be late for me, I do feel that it was unfortunate that I had received a copy of *The Death of a Division* by Charles Whiting, which left me feeling ashamed. I have since, after reading it at the library, purchased *A Time for Trumpets* by Charles MacDonald and am finishing *ST Vith: A Lion in the Way*, both of these were mentioned in an "editor note" in the Apr-May-Jun 1992 CUB. I now feel proud to wear the LION on my AMEXPOW cap.

Thanks again for the good work, Roy

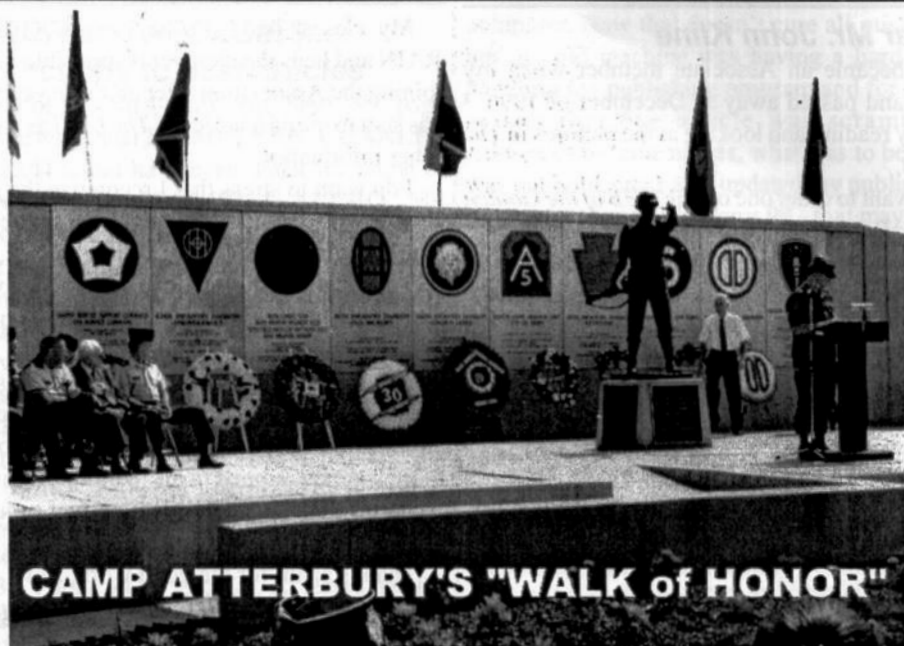
Roy, thanks to you. It is amazing how our life parallel. It was Charles Whiting who drove me underground right after the war. I too was ashamed. It was Charles MacDonald's A Time for Trumpets, in 1987 that brought me back to life. I then joined the Association and became editor of the Association quarterly that same year. It was a turning point in my life. The 106th was in an unfortunate position in December 1944. A front of over 21 miles, 2,000 yard open stretches between regiments, etc, etc. Any other division in that position would have been hard pressed to do any more than we did. I've heard from 2nd, 28th, 99th, 104th Infantry Division soldiers who tell me that exact same thing. Yes, they were more seasoned, but would not have been able to defend that open front.

I have some letters from Colonel Cavender 423rd Infantry Regiment Commander, that tell of his trip around the territory with his counterpart from the 2nd Infantry Division, Colone Boos. Col Boos, when asked by Cavender if he could expect better positions, said, "We've tried and they won't let us move. There are no secondary defenses and you will not be able to get any support." The rest is history.. Thanks Roy for you letter. John Kline, editor..

Note: e-mail users.....

If you are on e-mail please send me your address. My address is: jpk@mm.com

John Kline, editor...



Bricks to honor all individuals with a past or present connection to Camp Atterbury

The Camp Atterbury Veterans Memorial Association is announcing a program that allows all "Veterans (active and retired), reservists (active and retired) and Individuals with a connection to Camp Atterbury to adopt a brick for a relative, loved one, friend or themselves. This will allow you to have the individuals name, branch of service and years of service engraved on the brick. The "WALK of HONOR" will be constructed in front of the Veterans Memorial and form a walk way to the Memorial Wall. The cost of this honor is \$25.00 per brick, This offer is available to any veteran regardless of a connection to Camp Atterbury. Three lines, seventeen characters per line including spaces, will be centered on the face of the brick. Purchase as many as you want

REMEMBER ONLY 17 CHARACTERS PER LINE INCLUDING SPACES.

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Line two: ----- BRANCH eg: 106th Inf Div
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Mail to: NAF Accountant
Building #1 Camp Atterbury
Edinburgh, IN 46124

**SGT JOHN KLINE
M CO. 423rd INF
106TH INF DIV**

**PVT JOHN SMITH
106TH INF DIV
1943-1945**

A story of the pursuit of the Truth Correcting the Records on a Presidential Unit Citation

By Jack Sulser 423/F

Nearly two years ago a former member of the 1st Platoon, F Company, 423rd Infantry Regiment, **John McCrery** of Indianapolis, Indiana set out to correct the record before it was too late. He engaged his Congressman, Dan Burton, and both Indiana Senators, Lugar and Coats, in the effort.

After reaching an end to his resources John McCrery asked if I could help.

This is the way this whole story unfolded over those years.

War Department General Order No. 48, dated 12 July 1948, which was included in the Appendix of the 106th Division history *Lion in the Way*, awarded the Presidential Unit Citation to specific units of Combat Command B of the 7th Armored Division for the defense of St. Vith for the period 17 to 23 December 1944. The list of units cited **incorrectly included the 3rd Platoon of Company F of the 423rd Infantry Regiment.**

Members of F/423 have been aware since learning of the award when *Lion in the Way* was published in 1949 that the unit so honored **should have been the 1st Platoon**, which was detached from the Company when we arrived at the front and attached directly to 106th Division.

Headquarters Platoon Commander Lt. Bertsche, Platoon Sergeant Henry and their men became part of Col. Tom Riggs' valiant defense of St. Vith after the German attack and were then attached to CCB of the 7th Armored when that unit assumed command of remaining elements of the 106th in St. Vith.

I am very happy to report that Department of the Army Permanent Orders 032-01, dated 1 February 1999, **finally amends the 1948 General Order** to read that members of the **1st Platoon of F/423** are the rightful recipients of the **Presidential Unit Citation**, rather than the 3rd Platoon. This result, of course, in no way detracts from what members of the 3rd Platoon achieved on the Schnee Eifel as part of the 423rd Regiment between 16 and 19 December. Former 3rd Platoon Commander Lt. Oliver Patton (retired BGen) and other members of the 3rd Platoon endorsed the effort to correct the record.

Fortunately, the former Company Commander of F/423, Charles Zullig, is available and willingly furnished a statement that it was the 1st Platoon that was detached from the Company, while the 3rd Platoon remained with the him and was part of the Regiment at the surrender on December 19. These appeals were rebuffed by the Army with a statement that "contemporary documentation" was required to amend the award and that research in unit records at the National Archives provided no basis for changing the original award.

Naturally, there is a story behind getting the Army bureaucracy to change a decision after almost 51 years.

At this point McCrery asked if I could help. A friend, former 4-star General Frederick Kroesen, former Commander-in-Chief of US Army Europe, offered last April to take a history of the affair personally to the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, which includes the Awards Branch. Former F/423 CO Zullig submitted a more detailed and sworn statement. These were referred to the US Army Center for Military History. Retired General Kroesen followed up with personal contacts. Citing Zullig's statement and "coordination" with the Center for Military History, the Army finally decided on **February 1, 1999, to correct the earlier error.**

In addition to John McCrery, at least three other members of our Association will now be able to claim the Presidential Unit Citation they have deserved for half a century: **Ralph Hansen, Vincent Johnson and George Rinkema.** It took the combined efforts of a determined veteran, **John McCrery**, seeking just recognition, the willing assistance of his former company commander, the political support of his Members of Congress, and the disinterested intervention of a retired General to achieve this highly satisfactory outcome. *Jack Sulser.*



Sacramento, California Area - 1998

Michael Thome, 422/HQ 1bn, 1712-40th St, Sacramento, CA 95918 Tele: 916-451-2129

Men back row l/r: George C. Johnson; James W. Reed; Michael N. Thome; William K. Fowler **front row:** James H. Twinn; John A. Gregory; Edward A. Prewett; Edward D. Dunn; Walter Johannes. **Women back row:** Bessie Reed; Crystal Lewis; Joyce Alessandrino (granddaughter of James Twinn); Reddir Prewett **front row:** Terry Wood (friend of George Johnson); Shirley Gregory; Carol Bussell (daughter of Wm Fowler); Elaine Epling; Lucille Johannes.

The meeting was held at Andiamo's Restaurant in Sacramento. A good time was had by all. We remembered Roger Harradine died Sept 10, 1998 survived by his wife Vivian; Kellen Knight died 1998, survived by his wife Vivian; John J. Madden died Dec 30, 1987, survived by son James; Caude A. Kinney date of death unknow. Frank Nausin was absent due to illness.

Next year 12/16/1999 ; Host Edward Prewett- you'll be hearing from him.





Maryland, D.C. - Virginia Area Mini-Reunion 16 December 1998

John R. Schaffner, Cockeysville, Maryland

Nobody is saying who forgot the ladies, but here they are. See page 26 of the February CUB for the MEN... Ladies present: Left/Right Betty Lou Curtis; Rose Bachmurski; Catherine Barnes; Thelma Dovell. Mary Vandermast; Jean Hannon; Lynn Jones; Kathryn (K2) Kemp; Catherine Regier and Lillian Schaffner.

Lion's Share by Don Young

Date: Wed, 24 Mar 1999 16:50:42 EST

From: Bigdoni@aol.com To: jpk@mm.com

Dear John: I can't thank you enough for your ideas and help in getting **THE LION'S SHARE**, on the list of books authored by the 106th Infantry Division veterans. =====

The novel, **THE LION'S SHARE, A STORE OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE**, was written by the 106th DIV veteran Don Young, I Co, 422nd. (A sergeant who was wounded by shrapnel from the shelling by a Tiger Tank.) His novel is a fictional, surreal account of the actions of the 106th Infantry Division. The story depicts the first days of the Bulge, and the reactions of the GI's to their first shelling by enemy tanks and artillery. The novel also deals with the life of several veterans, during their days as prisoners in Germany until their release and final days in Paris.

THE LION'S SHARE is in its fourth edition, and has sold over 6,000 copies. The following comments were made: "I've read **THE LION'S SHARE** practically in one sitting with considerable admiration. The book is wonderfully readable."—Paul Fussel, author of **THE GREAT WAR AND MODERN MEMORY**. (Next column)

"I liked **THE LION'S SHARE**. It rings true. Only someone who was there could have written it."—John Toland, author of **THE STORY OF THE BULGE**.

For a copy of **THE LION'S SHARE**, send \$10 (which includes tax and shipping) to AVRANCHES PRESS, 1700 Cheryl Way, Aptos, CA 95003

Col Joseph Matthews 422/HQ

John. I know its late but can you find a spot for Dad's address. To date he has received 8 cards and I have gotten 10 e-mails for him. I've read them all to him at least two times. His reader told me he talks for hours about the letters. **You made his day!**. Looking forward to the May CUB. Dad wants it read word for word. My computer escaped the virus, many thanks for the warning. Joe's son, Bob Matthews
rjmatt@bmd.clis.com

Dad's Address

Col Joseph C. Matthews,
E.C.R. C. Room 1081
VA Medical Center
508 Fulton St, Durham, N.C. 27705

Traveling Europe 1998 - by John Schaffner - 589/A

PREFACE

John Gatens, Dave Ford, and myself had planned a trip back to England and Europe for 14 to 29 June 1998. John is a former member of A Battery of the 589th FABn and was made a POW at Baraque de Fraiture when the crossroads fell to the Germans on 23 December 1944. We became reacquainted at a reunion of the 106th Infantry Division in 1986 and have remained close friends. Dave is about 10 years younger than we are and served in the U.S. Army in Europe during the post war years. He became interested in the *Battle of the Bulge* after having the opportunity to survey the sites of these events. He has become an avid historian of the battle, an associate member of the 106th Infantry Division Association, and has made many trips back to Belgium, Germany, and Luxembourg to study the area of the battle and collect a great deal of memorabilia. His knowledge made the trip a lot more meaningful for John Gatens and me. We had a fabulous time.

To begin with, we were good traveling companions, our itinerary was planned but was also flexible, we had contacted those (CRIBA & CEBA) folks prior to going, AND, we were hosted as if we were VIP's plus.

Yes, did it again. Did it differently this time though. Maybe you would think that it is a lot of trouble to fly to England, put up with the jet-lag, and dragging luggage all over, and then taking a train and ferry to Europe just for a couple of weeks. Well, it is a lot of trouble, but for me and the two guys who went with me it was worth that and a lot more.

John Gatens, Dave Ford, and I had the time of our lives. After arriving in London and checking our baggage at the B & B, we hit the town. We had no sleep since the previous night and were feeling the effects, but the only way to go is to *keep going*. Seems like sleep, or the lack of it, is not accumulative. If you can make it through that first day, then get to bed early, you will be in fair shape to keep going. The weather in England was cool and wet (isn't it always?) but not enough that we needed our umbrellas.

That morning of our arrival, the **15th of June**, the first thing on our list was to visit The Cabinet War Rooms. This is an underground, bomb protected, installation that was used by

Prime Minister Winston Churchill and his military staff to conduct the business of wartime England. Its exact location was a well kept secret during the war and it was well guarded to admit only those few top leaders whose business it was to direct the war against Nazi Germany.

Today it is a museum and open to the public. The rooms are furnished as they were then and except for the lack of personnel, appear to be ready for business. As one walks through the rooms it is not hard to imagine the discussions and decisions that were made here. One room, equipped for the Prime Minister, displays the secure telephone that was directly connected to The White House in Washington, D.C. While viewing that room you can listen to a recording of a conversation between Winston Churchill and Franklin D. Roosevelt.

The War Rooms were staffed from mid 1938 until the end of World War II in August, 1945. This is a worthwhile place to visit if one has an interest in how the government of Great Britain was operated during those days when London was under constant attack by the Luftwaffe.

Our next stop was the Imperial War Museum in London. This museum is exactly as the name implies. It has an extensive display of aircraft, vehicles, armor, nasty weapons of the two World Wars, and full scale dioramas depicting the dirty day-to-day happenings that a soldier is confronted with. This is a large building with four floors crammed with displays of everything from buttons to tanks, from personal letters to V-2 rockets. The museum covers all of the human experiences of both wars in a fashion that every one is able to understand. There is no way that I can describe what we saw there without devoting an entire book to it. I was deeply drawn to a display of photos of the Victoria Cross awardees and their stories. It was hard to proceed further through the museum without reading about each and every one. Extra time should be allotted for this museum. We did not have enough. And, being the first full day of our adventure, we were tired.

Since it was "jet-lag day" we had supper at a local pub, The Seafresh Restaurant, and, of course we ate fish and chips. We hit the sack about 11:00 PM. Our B & B, a "walk-up," The



Gate Guards at Hendon

Winchester Hotel, was not The Ritz, but if you are tired enough, who cares? Tomorrow we plan to visit Hendon. I've been reading about this place for years and can't wait.

16 June 1998

We got up early at The Winchester Hotel and had a hardy English breakfast at their little dining room. This all comes with the cost of the room, and if you like eggs, ham (they call it "bacon"), toast and coffee or tea, then you are right at home. Jimmy, the hotel manager, is also the cook, takes care of the desk, and hauls out the trash among his other duties. (As I said the last time, this ain't The Ritz.) Also, the shower is so small that, if you drop the soap you have to get someone else to pick it up for you.

We had already found that we could take The Underground to Hendon. The line ran from Victoria Station, just around the corner, to Colindale, in Middlesex, which is a short walk to the old airbase. Of course, we were early enough to be included in the crowd going to work so we became "strap hangers" for a while. The London Underground has plenty of visual help for any user and we had no problems finding the right train. It was more of a problem trying to board an already full train. Courtesies? Forget it. Just squeeze yourself on and then exhale.

Once at Colindale it was not a long walk to the Aerodrome and I was filled with anticipation. I had read about this place for years and had seen many photos. We intended to spend all day there.

As one approaches the Museum the first thing to see are the two "gate-guards" which are a Hurricane and a Spitfire on pedestals. I was

convinced that I was looking at the real thing until I read the plaque that told me they were fiberglass replicas. Every part of them looked real to me.

Among the WW II types to see is a Halifax bomber that landed on a frozen lake during the war. The crew escaped but the plane went through the ice and spent the next 40+ years on the bottom. The remains of the aircraft were recovered about 8 years ago and are on display "as is." Also on display among the "museum quality" aircraft is the wreckage of a crashed Hurricane. These things bring to mind that all landings were not "happy" ones during the war. Many now rare types are on display and we had the unplanned coincidence to latch on to one of the docents of the museum who didn't mind spending time talking with us. I think we keep him from his lunch break.

You will find many of the "Early Birds" on display as well as World War I and World War II, between the wars, and after. Even the control cab from a German Zeppelin brought down during WW I. There are American, British, French, German, etc. Probably the latest additions are the Panavia Tornado, Phantom II, F-86 Sabre, and later jets.

Hendon Aerodrome is now an aviation museum of the highest rating. The field itself was the site of the beginnings of aviation in Great Britain. Two of England's first balloonists, Henry Coxwell and James Glaisher, made an unscheduled landing there on August 25, 1862. They had a balloon of 93,000 cubic feet capacity and were carrying five passengers. They took off again that day attaining a height of 16,000 feet. A few weeks later the two set an altitude record of 30,000 feet that stood for nearly forty years.

It was not until 1908 that H. P. Martin and G.H. Handasyde built a monoplane nearby. Their first airplane was not successful but later the two formed a partnership that became the Martinsyde Aeroplane Company.

The site began to attract the "early birds" of the day; Hawker, C. R. Fairey, Claude Graham-White, C. S. Rolls, T.O.M. Sopwith, J.T.C. Moore-Brabazon, Henri Farman, Glenn Curtiss, Louis Bleriot, A.V. Roe, etc. The early aero-clubs were first organized there and

Traveling Europe 1998 - by John Schaffner - 589/A

"Those Daring Young Men and Their Flying Machines" began to make aviation history with their regular meets.

The field was taken over in 1914 by the Admiralty and became a Royal Naval Air Station. During World War I a squadron of airplanes was established at Hendon for the purpose of attacking enemy aircraft attempting to molest London. Factories were established at Hendon to produce the BE2c, Farman S7 and S11 and other types for the military. Aircro (Avro), Deperdussin, DeHavilland, Dwyott, Breguet also contributed aircraft to the inventory at the field. The men and machines were equipped for night flying to combat the raids by German dirigibles and Gotha bombers but they had little success.

Hendon remained a major airfield throughout both World Wars and after, until its official closure on April 1, 1987, although the last day of flying was 4 November 1957. The RAF Museum was opened officially on 15 November 1972. At that time Graham-White's London Flying Club's buildings were still standing but they were finally torn down in 1974 to make way for expansion of The Hendon Police College. The aircraft on display are too numerous to mention individually but they have everything from stick and fabric to jets. You will just have to look at my photo album.

Before going to supper at a local pub we visited the Travel Information Office in London where John Gatens noticed a brochure for National Express Bus Line and found that a bus went direct to Duxford. We were able to buy our tickets on the spot. Very convenient for us.

On the 17th we met the National Express bus at 09:30 and rode to Duxford. There was only one bus a day that stopped at Duxford and we were cautioned that it would be there on the return trip at 16:15. On the way out I noticed that several of the farms in the area (East Anglia) were using Quonset type buildings. I couldn't help but think that they were left there by the 8th Air Force when the war came to an end in 1945. We saw some old hangers still in use as farm buildings when we were there in 1994 visiting around the Cambridge area.

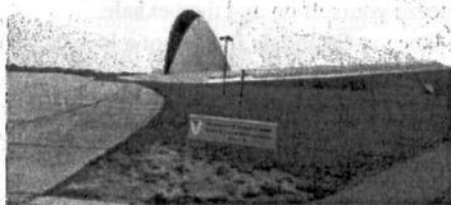
Duxford is an active flying field, still occupying the same space that it did during the

war. The big difference of course is that it houses several major museums. There is the Duxford Branch of the Imperial War Museum which includes, along with the RAF aircraft, a separate collection of ground warfare vehicles and weapons, a collection of Royal Navy aircraft, and the recently opened, American Air Museum in Britain. We spent the whole day there, which was not nearly enough time again.

The aerodrome was established during World War I and became the base for three DH9 day bomber squadrons and in 1918 the Royal Naval Air Service was merged with the Royal Flying Corps to become the Royal Air Force. Three of the original timber trussed hangers survive from that era and are now on the "protected" list of historic buildings. Duxford became a training field after WW I and there was a steady progression of aircraft employed there through the period between WW I & WW II.

Frank Whittle, a developer of the jet engine, flew from there as a member of the Cambridge University Air Squadron. (Cambridge is just a short hop to the north.) In later years Whittle settled in Annapolis, Maryland and taught at the U.S. Naval Academy. His work led to the development of the Gloster Meteor in 1943, the Allies first operational jet fighter.

The airfield was used by Hurricane and Spitfire squadrons under the command of Douglas Bader that were successful in repulsing the German Luftwaffe during the famous "Battle of Britain" era. In 1942 a wing of Hawker Typhoons based there flew regular tactical support sweeps over the continent disrupting efforts of the German Army.



American Air Museum of Britain
Duxford

Duxford airfield was handed over to the U.S. 8th Air Force in April of 1943 and not returned to the British until December 1945. During this period the 8th AF had about 200,000 men on the roster and Duxford became Base 357 and the headquarters of the 78th Fighter Group.

When one enters the museum area it is into the RAF section which is in a huge hangar housing many large and small military aircraft and a few civil types, including the Vulcan, Sunderland, Lancaster, Mosquito, Meteor, a Bristol Britannia, Canberra, and on and on, even a Mig 21. There is an example of the specialized bomb used by "The Dam Busters."

Outside this hangar is the flight line with an early example of the Concorde (only 14 were built), a Lockheed Constellation, a Douglas C-54, and several other large aircraft that a

lives while flying from British bases. The cost of liberty and freedom is never cheap. The largest item inside is the B-52 and all else is dwarfed beside it, over, and under it. There is a B-17G, B-29, Spad, AT-6, P-47, P-51, B-25, C-47, Avenger, F-86, F-4, F-111, A-10, U-2, etc, etc. So much stuff that it makes you want to come back.

Then there is the Royal Navy Collection of aircraft. Then there is a separate building housing all of the examples of ground warfare, armor, tanks and other armored vehicles, mobile guns, etc, etc.. If you have any intention of visiting here, better reserve several days. One was not nearly enough.

Again, I made many photos for the album, but, the bus that was to return us to London was stopping at 16:15 and we had to be on it. Have I had my fill of airplanes? No, I could go back anytime.

That evening I phoned Nick Jonckheere in Oostende and arranged with him to meet us tomorrow at the Calais ferry terminal.

On the 18th we bought train tickets to carry us from Victoria Station to Dover, intending to catch the ferry to Calais at 12:00. The train we were on broke down just short of Dover ("problem on the track," the man said.) and by the time we got rolling again we missed the noon ferry. We caught the one at 1 PM. however, and, after a smooth ride across the English Channel, were an hour late getting to Calais. Nick Jonckheere was waiting for us in the terminal. He was aware of the problems with the ferries and was actually a half-hour late himself.

We loaded ourselves and our baggage in Nick's car and drove to La Coupole, a German built installation along the Pas de Calais, designed for the assembly and launching of V-1 and V-2 missiles against London. The place consists of an arrangement of tunnels mined into the base of a solid rock hill and capped by a dome shaped roof of 18 feet of reinforced concrete. The plans called for the missiles to be launched at the rate of 50 per day. Due to the incessant bombing by the 8th Air Force during the construction, the project was not completed in time to be of use. When the Allies landed at Normandy on 6 June 1944 all construction ceased. Prior to that time about 5,000 tons of bombs were dropped in the area, but the dome itself was never penetrated. Since these



At the Duxford Aerodrom
Mr. Schaffner, Davis and Gatlen

visitor can walk through. Then there are the actively flying ones to see. The day that we visited there a rare DH Dragon Rapide was flying. We could have bought a spin around the patch but didn't want to use the limited time we had. Most of the WW II aircraft that fly regularly at the air shows in England are based there. (I was privileged to watch one of these shows in 1994.) They have a B-17, B-25, Blenheim, Spitfires, Mustangs, P-47, Hurricane, Hellcat, Bearcat, Me-109, Heinkel 111, etc, etc.

Next in line is the new American Air Museum In Britain. This only recently opened and houses the finest collection of American combat aircraft outside of the United States.

This museum stands as a memorial to more than 30,000 American airmen who lost their

structures were made with massive amounts of reinforced concrete, to remove them would be ridiculously expensive. Today it is a museum and worth a visit. The displays inside depict the operation as it was intended to be used against the British. Since the end of WW II we have been continually learning about the weapons of destruction that the Nazis had either under development or on the drawing board. Thankfully, like this one, they were never put into operation.

Nick then drove us to "The Jonckheere Towers" (Nick's home) in Oostende. The American flag was flying from the front of the house and his parents greeted us very warmly. They helped us unload our baggage and settle in and there seemed to be a lot to talk about. Even though Nick was the only one fluent with English, his parents knew enough to understand most of what we were talking about. Nick's mother fixed a mighty fine dinner that we enjoyed very much with them, and we didn't get to bed until midnight. It is a talented family with hobbies of restoring old autos and motorcycles, not to mention Nick's radio controlled airplanes. That night Dave slept in the room that Nick's brother used before he moved out. Gatens and I slept in Nick's parent's bed and *they slept in the garage*. How's that for hospitality?

19 June 1998

Everybody was up and ready for breakfast at 08:30 and Nick's Mom had the table ready by the time we came downstairs. She was a most gracious hostess to us. Even though I had known Nick as a "pen-pal" for about four years, and he had visited us in the States, we were actually strangers to his parents. They treated us like family.

Nick drove us around the area of Oostende to see the concrete German defensive installations there. Here, along the shore of the North Sea, the Germans had erected many, many, bomb-proof, reinforced-concrete, defensive blockhouses near the port of Oostende. (In 1944 there were no *easy* places to invade Europe.) These also are much too expensive to do anything with. Today the cattle graze and crops are grown in the fields around them. No doubt some of the farmers are using them for storage.

They will probably be there for many hundreds of years. No need to hurry to see them. (Aside, I tried to imagine how much concrete the Germans must have poured in pursuit of taking over the world? Later on we get to see more, a lot more.)

Nick showed us several places where planes had crashed in the neighborhood during WW II. At one location the entire tail section of a B-17, having broken off the rest of the aircraft, made a "soft" landing with the tail gunner still inside. The airman was taken in by the farmer whose barn he landed near, hidden from the Germans, and later smuggled back to England. In recent years that same ex-tail-gunner has visited that Belgian family that provided him refuge from the enemy. There is a genuine, warm, bond that comes from this kind of experience. Since becoming acquainted with some folks in Belgium and Luxembourg myself, I know the feeling.

Nick also took us to the field where his R/C model airplane club flies. It is in "Pouder" country and is perfectly flat. This area, near Holland, was "reclaimed" from the sea many generations ago and is protected by dikes and canals that control the water level. The only problem the model airplane club has is a small canal that runs past the field. You guessed it, just like the pond on a golf course attracts a golf ball, the canal attracts model airplanes.

We spent part of the morning inspecting some of the old German built concrete bunkers and while in a grassy area near one, saw an unusual sight. There was a man with a fine mesh net on the end of a broomstick sweeping it back and forth over the ground just above the grass. Of course, we approached him and opened a conversation with the intention of finding out just what he was doing. Seems that he was in the business of raising Amazonian frogs. The frogs need flies for food, so he was, yes, catching flies. He was carrying a net bag that he transferred the catch into. The frogs like their flies alive and fresh. Live and learn.

After a nice lunch with the Jonckheeres (no flies) we loaded our baggage again and Nick drove us to Dicksuide and Ypres. While in Ypres, we visited the huge cathedral which also housed a museum of items pertaining to World War I. This area was a bloody battlefield during

that time and there are monuments everywhere to the memory of those thousands of soldiers who died there as a result of the trench warfare. One large archway in Ypres, known as "The Menin Gate," is dedicated to the British who fought and died there. Not far away is a huge crater that was created by the explosion of a "land mine" in 1917. Both armies literally dug tunnels under the trenches of the other side and exploded huge amounts of dynamite in an attempt to destroy the enemy. More often than not, both sides suffered casualties when one of these "mines" was detonated. Figures released state that during WW I France lost an estimated 1,300,000 soldiers, Germany 1,700,000, Britain more than 900,000, Italy 650,000, U.S.A. 116,000. Total, the First World War caused the deaths of 13 million civilians and 8,500,000 fighting men. Incredible.

We then continued on to Mons where we had arranged to pick up a rental car. With regrets, we had to bid "So Long" to Nick, thanked him for his and his parent's hospitality, and headed down the highway to Charleroi to spend the night at the Holiday Inn. I am sure that there is a chance that we will be seeing Nick again in the States. He is a most talented and pleasant person to be with.

It was a beautiful day for driving and we had no problem navigating the highways, that is,

until we arrived in Charleroi. Our friend, Vince Gerard, had secured accommodations for us at the Holiday Inn at Charleroi and gave us explicit instructions for finding it. (Vincent Gerard is a Belgian fellow who we met in 1997 at the reunion of the 106th Infantry Division Association. He lives in Somzee, Belgium and is an avid historian of WW II and is continually seeking first hand accounts of the actions that took place near his home. He is also a most gracious host to veterans of the *Battle of the Bulge* and does his utmost to accommodate any vet who visit the area. He also knows a great deal more about what happened than we, who were there, do.) Once we arrived in town we were promptly lost and cruised around looking for the hotel. After making several inquiries from the locals (yes, *real men do ask for directions*), we arrived at The Holiday Inn about an hour late. I am convinced that we arrived traveling north to south on the bypass instead of south to north, which would have put us on target, no sweat. Vince was at the door of the car as soon as we pulled in the driveway. Although she could speak no English, Vince's Aunt also came along to greet us. We had another very warm welcome.

We checked into the Holiday Inn and then Vince led us to his home at Somzee, where we had a great dinner with him, his brother, his



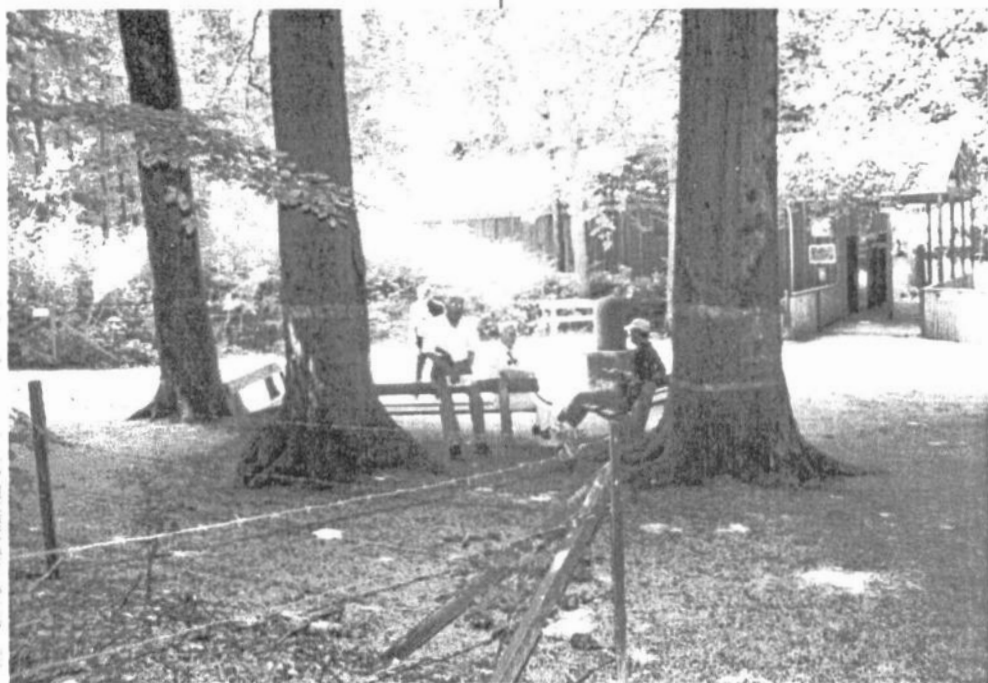
Dinner at the home of the Gerard's, Somzee, Belgium. L/r Clockwise: Vincent Gerard's Aunt, his Mother, Vincent himself, his brother, David Ford and John Gatens, with Schaffner behind the camera.



Bruly-de-Pesche, a secluded village near the French/Belgian border where Hitler and his staff established a field headquarters in 1940 prior to invading France. Here Ford, Gatens and Schaffner on the porch of a the chalet Hitler and Goering are exiting in the photo below. Notice the tree (see stripes) that has grown.



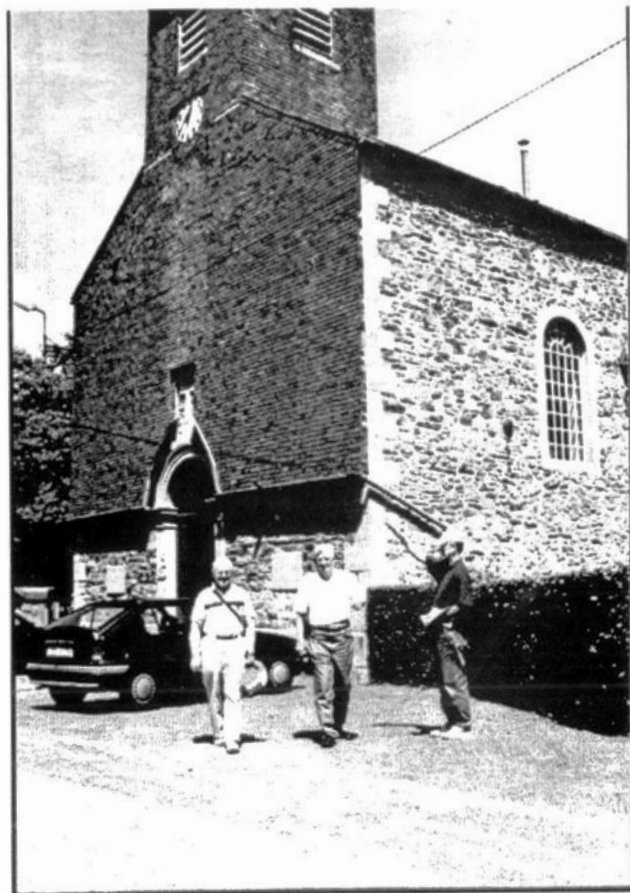
A series of Post-Card photos furnished by the people of the village of Bruly-de-Pesche This series of photos on these following pages are THEN and NOW photos of Hitler's 1940 Ffield Headquarters. Over 40 nearby villages were emptied of the occupants, for security reasons, while Hitler was here in 1940. This photo shows Hitler and Goering leaving a chalet near the Headquarters Bunker..



Bruly-de-Pesche, a secluded village near the French/Belgian border where Hitler and his staff established a field headquarters in 1940 prior to invading France. Here a photo of Ford, Gatens and Schaffner in the yard of the headquarters complex. See photo of Himmler and Goering below at this location in 1940.



Himmler and Hitler in the yard discussing "company business" in 1940. Schaffner, Gatens and Ford are shown in the same spot in photo above.



John Gatens,
left; John
Schaffner, middle
accepting
the German
salute given by
David Ford.

This photo to mimic
the photo
on the right
where Hitler's
entourage of
officers is
walking in front
of the church.

Hitler used the
church to view
movie films of his
troops.

Same setting
in 1940, with
Hitler on the left,
an unknown
officer, then
Reisch Marschal
Goering.
Borman to
Goering's left
and Hitler's staff
saluting.

Please note the
absence of the
"Cross" on the
church.

It appears to be
either bricked
over, or the
photo was
altered by the
propoganda
staff.

The clock
is also hidden
or was not
there in 1940.





John Gatens, left;
David Ford,
middle
and John
Schaffner right
in front of the
same building
in

Bruly-de-Pesche
that appears in
the photo to the
right of Hitler and
a Staff officer.
Only difference
looks like a
telephone booth,
a shelter next to
the booth and a
balcony added to
the upstairs
window.

Even the
shrubby looks
the same.

Same setting in
1940, with Hitler
on the left strolling
through the
community with
Captain Engel, his
aide de camp on
the right



Mother and his Aunt. After a very friendly evening there, and an inspection of his collection of battlefield items, Vince led us back to our hotel (just to make sure that we didn't get lost again.) It was another midnight bedtime.

Our Belgian friend, Vince Gerard, met us again in the morning (June 20th) at the Holiday Inn Charleroi, and we started another interesting day. Vince's mother and aunt came along with Vince to help entertain us. Even though they could speak no English, the ladies seem to enjoy what ever we did and were never in the way. Dave drove our rented car and we followed Vince. Vince led us to the village of Bruly-de-Pesche. This is a secluded village near the French/Belgian borders where Hitler and his staff had their field headquarters in 1940 prior to invading a weakly defended France. Probably about half of the French people were too frightened not, or otherwise willing, to go along with the Nazi takeover at the time and the other half were too weak to do much about it. The German had things his way in France after the initial assault. Little has changed in this place, so we could actually walk in the footprints of these Nazi leaders. This small village is very important to the history of World War II. Even though it never suffered battle damage, decisions were made here that affected the lives (and deaths) of a great many people. More that one can imagine, especially in the atmosphere of peace and freedom that pervades this quiet country setting today. It was a very quiet day of mild temperatures and a beautiful blue cloudless sky. We were the only visitors. The only noise was that of the chattering birds, our feet crunching down the wooded path, and our conversation.

We bought some post cards in the souvenir shop that featured photos of Hitler and his staff at this site. The gentleman in charge was kind enough to set up a video tape that was a collection of old movie newsreel scenes, mostly of Hitler and his staff and the Blitzkrieg attack through Luxembourg, Belgium, and into France in 1940. Later, outside, using the postcard photos as a guide, we posed in the very footprints of the infamous Nazi leaders. The post cards and our current photos make an interesting comparison.

It was about lunchtime when were finished there, so we ate at the local inn & café at the

village. The elderly procreator seated us outside and took our order. Pick up any European travel brochure, and you may see us sitting at tables outside of a picturesque inn, under a clear blue sky, with a lunch of a ham omelet, home fries, and a light Belgian beer to wash it all down. Is this great, or what? What a life! (As a side note, wherever we went with our guide he would explain that we were American veterans. Any admission charge would be waived for us.)

We also stopped to see the chateau of Count de Ribaucourt at Serville. Vince tells us that this is where a part what was left of the 589th FABn sought refuge after the unit was divided and disorganized on 19 December 1944. (The other men of the 589th were then detailed to spend a few days at Baraque de Fraiture, charged with the task of delaying the advance of the German Army's 2nd SS Panzer Division 19 -23 Dec. '44. That is another story.) I was convinced that this was the chateau that my good friend, Don Humphrey, had told me about in later years. We were told that it had become an orphanage after the war. It appears to be lived in currently but we don't know anything else about it. Don said that he didn't recognize the place from the photo, but then, those were different times. Vince was sure this was the place. Later, I found out that Don was most likely at another chateau, at Xhos, where some others of the 589th FABn had sought shelter from the severe winter weather. These places were, and still are, occupied by royalty. Like something out of a fairy tale book.

That afternoon we drove to Baraque de Fraiture, met with Maria LeHaire at the Inn, The Auberge du Carrefour, and after a most warm greeting, got settled in our rooms. We were her guests for the next four days. Maria was most happy to see us, and although she speaks no English, she greets us with genuine warmth. Three kisses on the cheeks, Belgian style. She was just a teenage girl when we defended these crossroads in December 1944. Her father was the procreator then and came very close to losing his life at the hands of the Germans when they overran our positions. As it was, they abused him terribly and I am sure

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the experience shortened his life, but again, that's another story.

Our friend, Henri Rogister, came in about 4:30 to be our escort for the evening. Henri first took us by Raymond Goeme's home in Beaufays, where we met with Raymond and his wife, Charlotte, and spent about an hour or so. I had met Raymond for the first time in 1992 when he volunteered to escort us around the area of the *Battle of the Bulge* where I was involved with the 589th Field Artillery Battalion. Since then, we have developed a close friendship, mostly by correspondence, of course.

Raymond had been in the hospital the day before, preparing for a 3-way bypass operation, and came home on this day so he could be with us. We were treated to refreshments and spent a too short visit with him and Charlotte. Next day he went back for the operation. We heard via our CRIBA friends that he is recovering O.K. and, since being home, I have heard from him personally.

When we departed the Goeme's home, Henri steered us to Albert Fosty's home. Albert already had Eddy Monfort and Charles Corbin there for the party. Eddy is a Belgian man of 28,

who is dedicated to the history of the *Battle of the Bulge*. He has authored one book and is currently working on another. Charlie is the current president of the 3rd Armored Division Association and had been in Belgium for a couple of weeks doing battle research with Eddy's help. We had to sample Albert's fine wine first on the patio and then went inside where his wife, Annie, had prepared a fine dinner for all of us. After the meal Albert showed us his souvenirs from the *Battle of the Bulge*. Albert was one of our guests last year (1997) and told us then that he had taken off in airplanes 52 times but only landed in one once. Seems he had been a paratrooper in the Belgian Army and jumped every time he had gone up. These folks are really fun for us to be with, although we had met personally only a few times. It is like coming home.

We were late leaving the Fosty's and wondered about getting back into our rooms at the Auberge at that hour. Turned out to be no problem. Both Maria and her son-in-law, Claude, were waiting up for us. I felt like a high



At the Goeme's home. Sitting Madam Charlotte Goeme and David Ford. Back l/r: John Schaffner, Raymond Goeme and John Gatens. Raymond had been to the hospital the day before preparing for bypas surgery.

school kid returning home after a late date. (I can hear it now, "Where you been, boy?")

We woke up on the morning (21st) at the Auberge du Carrefour and came down to have breakfast with Henri. It's another beautiful blue-sky day. After eating, we loaded into our rental car and Henri took right over as our guide. We spent the day visiting those locations where much of the important action took place during the *Battle of the Bulge*. The terrain here is very much like Carroll County and the northern part of Baltimore County. There are many farms, rolling hills, scattered forests (of mostly evergreens, mainly fir trees) small villages, gently running rivers in between. I was amazed at how peaceful it all looks now and how the population has restored Belgium and Luxembourg to its original appearance. The only evidence that this area had been devastated by warfare was the many monuments dedicated to those units and individuals that fought (and died) there.

Very noticeable on this day were the many motorcyclists. It must be a popular Sunday activity in Belgium. Gasoline costs 3-4 times what it does in the States (37 BF/liter today.) We visited Cheneux, and La Gleize, where a Military Flea Market was in progress with many Belgian, French, and German dealers and customers. We could have bought anything from a uniform button to a 1944 Jeep or a 2&1/2 ton G.I. truck. There were small arms of every description, field equipment, gas-masks, uniforms, medals, helmets, bayonets, combat knives, mess-kits, packs, belts, even artillery shells (de-militarized, I hope.)

The village of La Gleize is also the site of a very complete Museum of World War II items. Henri informed the attendant at the door of the museum that we had been American G.I.s and had fought in that neighborhood in 1944-45. The door was opened to us, again no charge. La Gleize was the "high water mark" in this area of the German attack of Dec. 1944-Jan. 1945. The Germans had made an all-out attempt, but we were there, and Hitler had greatly underestimated the American G.I.

We went on to visit many places; Bra, the "Damned Engineer's" Bridge at Werbramont, Lienne Creek, Rahier. At one place where we

stopped, we could see the chateau in the distance that had been the infamous German Col. Jachem Pieper's most forward H.Q. We drove to the Valley of the Ambleve, and Rochelival, where the 551st Parachute Battalion was all but wiped out in a fierce battle. Henri even directed us into the town of Spa, where I had my first bath in about two months, sometime about the middle of February 1945. When it got close to lunchtime we stopped at a mobile vendor selling pomme frites and had an order of fries with a canned Lipton's Ice Tea to wash it down. (Try dipping a french-fry in mayonnaise sometime.)

There are approximately 400 monuments to the Americans in the Belgian Ardennes area. Much American blood was spilled here during the winter of 1944-45. About 18,000 Americans killed in this battle alone. (Plus a lot more German soldiers.) The people of Belgium and Luxembourg want everyone to know that *they do not forget the cost of their freedom*. Except for that generation that experienced WW II, I sometimes wonder if the rest of America knows what their freedom cost. It should never be taken lightly. (It upsets me to see the American flag disrespected by Americans or the national anthem sung without reverence.)

During this day's tour, I noticed that there was no such thing as a frame house in this part of the world. They all appeared to be made of some type of masonry, or stuccoed, and nearly all displayed flower boxes at the windows. Just like you find in the travel brochures. Land is obviously at a premium here. Belgium is about equal to Maryland in square miles. Moreover, except for those very wealthy or of royalty, strict regulations govern how one can locate a house on a building lot. Individual homes are usually built close to the road. Maximum set back is 3 meters in many places.

Before returning to Baraque de Fraiture, we stopped at the home of Jean-Francois Noirhomme and visited his "personal" museum. The family lives in a renovated mill, complete with a working water wheel. Jean-Francois, who is about 30, and his father, Robert, have an extensive collection of both American and German uniforms, equipment, weapons, insignia, ammunition (both expended

and live), and even an operating Jeep (plus another one under restoration.) I am sure that they have enough items to stock a very respectable museum. All of this fills an adjoining building that was once a part of the mill operation. Jean-Francois is an English teacher and speaks the language better than most Americans do. His father, Robert, is quite an artist working in several mediums. Robert made the very nice plaque, depicting an over-coated G.I. wearing the 106th patch, that we were presented with at the banquet at the Auberge later that evening. We were offered refreshments, but had to turn them down since we were expected to participate soon in a ceremony at the crossroads followed by a banquet. I hope that they were not hurt by our refusal. When we were ready to leave Robert Noirhomme gave us a real "white knuckle" ride back to the Baraque in his car. He must have been taught to drive by Richard Petty. These Belgian guys all seem to be late, where ever they are going. The pedal is always on the floor, be it accelerator or brakes. Of course we didn't

mind, since the faster we traveled, the more we would see and do.

That evening, at about 6 PM, we participated in a very solemn ceremony at the memorial at Baraque de Fraiture with the folks of the CRIBA organization. Andre Hubert made a very sensitive speech* honoring all those Americans who fought there, and John Gatens and I placed a bouquet at the monument. The monument here consists of a 105mm Howitzer placed on a concrete, five pointed star, and backed by three flagpoles flying the American, Belgian, and European Community flags. On three sides are stela holding bronze plaques describing the action and the American units that fought to hold these important crossroads during the *Battle of the Bulge*.

*(During Andre's talk, about 50 motorcycles roared around the corner and forced a pause in the ceremony.)

After the ceremony at the monument everyone then retired to the Auberge du Carrefour, just across the road, for a most pleasant and elaborate banquet provided by Maria LeHaire and her daughter Bernadette



At the Hotel Auberge du Carrefour, Parker's Crossroads

L/R: John Gatens; Bernadette, Marie LeHaire's daughter; John Schaffner (back) Marie LeHaire; Charles Corbin (President 3rd Armored Div Assoc); Mary Nicolay and David Ford.

LeJeune with 32 CRIBA members attending. Andre Hubert gave a very moving speech welcoming us and we received many gifts from some of our CRIBA friends for our wives and ourselves. There were many courses and much of that great wine. John Gatens and I were the guests of honor representing all those G.I.s who fought in the Ardennes during that most bitter winter. We were overwhelmed by the hospitality shown us by our Belgian friends. We have to remember that we are the lucky ones, representing those ex-G.I.s who were left there in the military cemeteries, or those who could not return at this late date, for whatever the reason.

The evening wound down with much chatter, toasting, and a wonderful feeling of comradery. A 45-RPM record player was placed in action and we had music by Glenn Miller and dancing to the big band tunes of the forties. The party broke up about mid-night. (I think we drank ALL of the wine!) The guests all left for home and we three made our way to bed. Glad I didn't have to clean up.

Earlier, at the ceremony, I had given my camera to my very good Belgian friend, Jacques Rummens, to use. Jacques did a great job for me, using nearly three rolls of film. This is one of the few times that I show up on the photos. More often than not, I am taking the pictures. Many thanks for a great job, Jacques! Sorry that *you* are not on any of my pictures.

22nd Woke up as a zombie, couldn't find my butt with either hand. We sure had plenty to eat and drink the night before, but there were no hangovers. Must have been good stuff. Maria had a nice breakfast set out for us when we came down. She is just "The Greatest."

Henri Register and Jean-Francois Noirhomme, with his metal detector, came early to entertain us today. We searched around the crossroads, behind the Inn on the lawn, and found all sorts of battlefield junk. .30 cal. carbine rounds, .50 cal. casings and some unspent rounds, a 'pineapple' grenade cap, ammo box lids, parts of a G.I. vehicle windshield frame. Even one 88mm projectile that had failed to explode. All of this in the sod, only inches below the neatly mowed grass. Jean-Francois said that he would notify the

team that cleans up the unexploded ordnance to come and collect the projectile for disposal. I felt nervous around that thing. They have been known to explode on occasion. I would hate to have been killed by accident when they didn't get me on purpose!

There was a crew working with a backhoe installing a sewer line nearby. Earlier in the day the machine had struck a smoke grenade and exploded it. Jean-Francois volunteered to sweep their path with his metal detector before they proceeded further.

Hard to believe, but we located the (partially filled in) foxhole that I was in the night the German patrol approached on the road from Houffalize. Jean-Francois told us that he had been there before and found a pistol and telephone wire in the ditch. If these holes are not in an area being cultivated or otherwise used, nobody bothers to fill them in. Just let Mother Nature do it. This one was located at the edge of the road where it was not quite close enough to have been filled in when the road was improved, or cultivated when the field was farmed. During this time that we were "treasure hunting" we were impressed by jet fighter planes zipping overhead at a very low altitude. They were NATO Tornados, A-10s and F-15s and apparently on some sort of training exercise. Being satisfied with the items that we found, we released Jean-Francois and spent the rest of the day touring the area with Henri guiding us.

One of the places that we visited was Thier du Mont, another place of an important battle with 82nd AB troops shooting it out with the Germans. We drove into Houffalize to view the German tank placed there as a monument. While there we struck up a conversation with a German fellow, about 50 years old I would guess, and wearing an American field uniform bearing a patch of the 2nd Cavalry Division. Seems that he is a member of a historical group that was on a tour of the area of the *Battle of the Bulge*. He was also a big, tough looking fellow so we didn't say anything to provoke him. I suppose he was "playing soldier."

Since I was in the company of beer drinkers we stopped at the famous Achouffe Brewery and bought a 3/750ml-bottle pack of their best

beer. Come to think of it, I don't remember being offered a glass from one of those bottles. (I wonder what became of them?) When we arrived back at the Baraque we had a beer at Maria's *other* place, which is just across the intersection of the crossroads. Come to think of it, we had a couple of beers. If Maria found out that we had bought drinks across the road she would have given us the dickens. If *she* had served us, the drinks would have been on the house.

Our final stop that day was at the Monfort home where we were welcomed with another glass of wine. Eddy Monfort (28) is a young man that we have been in touch with since 1993. We met for the first time in 1994 during a trip that observed the 50th anniversary of the *Battle of the Bulge* when Eddy presented me with a copy of a book he had written about the fighting in this area. It contains a part of my personal experience here in 1944. Only problem is that it is published in French. Someday I will have to learn to read French. Eddy, his Mom and Dad, and two brothers were on hand to give us a nice welcome. They popped the cork on another bottle of wine, of course.

That morning a calf was born in the barn, right next to the house, so we were taken in and introduced to the little fellow. Apparently this breed of cow cannot bear a calf naturally so they are all born Cesarean. Eddy's mother prodded the cow with a big stick until the cow got up and turned around so we could see the incision in her side. (All this before dinner.) Later on we saw more of this breed of cattle in the fields and noticed the shaved area on their sides and the long scar. These little calves never get too old. They are raised for veal, which is very popular in the restaurants there. When the cows get too old for breeding they are sold off for beef. We are never too old to learn something new. They also had a wild pig in the barn that one of the Monfort sons found in the woods nearby. I thought it to be a strange looking animal, with a short body, long spindly legs, and a face only its mother could love. The adult wild pigs appear to be very dangerous. This one may appear some day on the dinner table with an apple in its mouth. It is considered a delicacy in this part of Europe.

We were shown the garage building where Eddy's brother was restoring a Porsche

automobile on a full size lift. Under the shed out back he had about six more cars waiting to be worked on. Also in this building was a nice assortment of powered wood working tools that Eddy uses. In the house was a beautiful Grandfather's Clock that Eddy had made. He is a cabinetmaker, first class, and his work is highly valued. We were treated to drinks and then to another full dinner of Assiette de Ardennes in the dining room. Charlie Corbin was here also and was invited to share the meal with us.

June 23rd. We had breakfast at the Auberge with two popular (and busy) members of CRIBA, Joseph Gavroye and Andre Hubert. Afterwards Joseph led us to his "growing up" neighborhood (close by) where he describes watching the battle from his window. He was about 15 at the time and recalls much. His English is not too good, but his arm waving and "BOOMBA !!! here, and BOOMBA !!! there, are very descriptive. He is great to be with. Joseph presented me with a piece of "coticule" stone. This is a very fine grain stone that is unique to this area near the village of Salmchateau. It is used worldwide for the sharpening of knives, especially surgical instruments. Joseph had to leave us at about 10:00 so Andre took over and spent the rest of the day with us covering the area of the battle with his expert knowledge. We toured through Regne, Manhay, and Grand Menil (where there is a tank installed as a monument.) Pfc. Melvin Biddle was awarded the CMH for his action on the Soy-Hotton road in this area of Sadzot, where an important battle, described in book by William B. Breuer, occurred. (Breuer also wrote a book describing the action at Stavelot titled, "Bloody Clash at Sadzot".) We toured to Beffe where a Sherman tank that sat in field for 30 years is now a monument to Task Force Hogan. There are so many stories to be told about the fighting that occurred at these now very peaceful places.

We returned to the Auberge about supertime and Maria had us as guests for dinner in the dining room in her home, which is part of the Inn. Andre, Henri, and Eddy stayed with us for the little party. Maria's sister, Louise, also was there. I think maybe to give

Maria a hand as well. The wine poured and the conversation carried on and we were all late getting to bed again.

24 June 1998 Wednesday

We got up about 0730 at the Baraque and had breakfast with our hostess, Maria. She has been most gracious; offering us all her worldly possessions, if that would make us any happier.

Vince (and his mother) arrived and we departed about 10:00 to check around the bridge that crosses the Our River at Schoenberg at the place where A Battery lost their 4th gun section and Lt. Eric Wood escaped to the woods. Sgt. Scannipico and his driver, T/5 Ken Knoll, were KIA here and the rest of the crew captured. The group that I was with (Dec., 1944) barely made it through the village before the German forces moved in. The Our River is still flowing gently under the bridge and today we stand there watching young mothers pushing their baby carriages across, oblivious to its bloody history.

From there we proceeded to Bleialf passing the area where the 589th withdrew to on the 17th Dec. 1944. While in the, now peaceful, little town of Bleialf, Dave went off across the square to look up an old acquaintance from a previous visit while John Gatens and I munched down some goodies from the local bakery. I felt a bit strange, actually uncomfortable, just standing there in the open where there had been so much going on the last time I was there. One had to take cover then, almost 54 years ago. The town was in shambles then, having been blasted by both sides. No sign of it now. We then drove on the road toward Auw to find the location of the battalion's position when the big attack came on the morning of 16 Dec. 1944. Vince has been here many times before and is an excellent guide. The sign on the road identifies the site as Herzfenn. There are a few dwellings there and one could say that it has not changed much since 1944. The terrain is still the same but the weather is much nicer this time.

We found the positions of the batteries without any doubt. The first time that I was at this place we arrived at night, in snow covered ground, without a clue to where we were. Roaming the woods where B Battery was located in a deep defile on the north side of the

road turned up a few rusted pieces of hardware in the vicinity of mostly filled in foxholes. We have to consider that the collectors of military leavings have picked over this area for the last 53 years. We didn't expect to find much. While walking back up the lane toward the road, I could easily remember the time that we abandoned this place. The vehicles were slipping and sliding in the snow and the Jeep that I was riding in slipped off the narrow lane and had to be left there on its side. The battery finally made it out to the road without any casualties to the personnel and "relocated to the rear."

We then went on to A Battery's position on the other (south) side of the road. Here we were able to find hard evidence of exactly where the howitzers were placed. The ground contains cast off packing spacers from the 105mm howitzer rounds. These were made of steel and although heavily rusted, there is no mistaking their identity. We brought back a few of them as souvenirs for John Gatens. It was on this very spot where his 105mm howitzer was emplaced when the German Army came at us on the morning of 16 Dec. 1944.

Being oriented, we were able to move up on the road toward Auw and stand where the German tank was when its usefulness was brought to an end by Gatens' howitzer firing a direct sight. Even though it is a beautiful summer day our thoughts easily go back to that cold, snow swept scene, when all hell broke loose on the Schnee Eifel.

While in that area, Vince pointed out the fields where the members of the 422 Infantry Regiment were forced to surrender after expending their ammunition, and with no further means of carrying on the fight.

We drove on down to Bastogne where Vince had told us that he had a pleasant surprise for us. He spoke of this "surprise" before and nothing we said would bring it out of him. After getting parked in McAuliff Square we walked on down the main street and Vince led us into the Hotel de Ville (City Hall.) In the lobby there was a distinguished looking gentleman who turned out to be the Deputy Mayor, M. Marcel Lafontaine, standing there with several others in front of a life size bronze statue of an American soldier. Vince introduced us, and,

with a reporter & cameraman standing by, welcomed us with a nice speech (in French) and invited us to his office upstairs. Now what? We settled down around the big desk and an aide served us coffee (it was already hot enough to fry eggs on the sidewalk.) There was more casual conversation and expressions of gratitude to the Americans who gave them back their freedom (twice.) Vince Gerard did the translating for us. And, then John Gatens and I were presented with the (Commemorative) Medal of Bastogne. Quite a surprise indeed! The only regret is we were dressed for tramping the woods, not receiving honors. The next day the Bastogne newspaper had an article about us, complete with two photos. We were totally unprepared for this and left somewhat overwhelmed by the whole affair.

From the Bastogne newspaper, "La Lorgnette":

"A few days ago two American Veterans came back to Bastogne and the area. They were John Schaffner and John Gatens who had been mainly fighting at Baraque de Fraiture. This crossroads had been defended heroically by the soldiers of the 106th Infantry Division who wanted to prevent the German advance towards Liege, and did so during the fighting that was taking place 19 - 23 December 1944.

They were greeted at the City Hall by Marcel Lafontaine who presented the Commemorative Medal of Bastogne to them. They also were escorted to the Bois de la Paix at Bizory to view the trees that had been planted in their honor.

This was also the opportunity for Armand Schmitz to speak with another former prisoner of war, John Gatens, who spent four months as a POW and lost 20 kilos as a result."

After this most pleasant surprise we stopped in a bakery, selected outrageous, custard filled pastry, and just enjoyed being there. (Note: At this time we knew nothing of the trees. That was coming later as another surprise.)

From where we had parked in McAuliffe Square we drove to the Musee L'Histoire et d'Archeologie, just a few minutes away. M. Robert Fergloute, the curator, had been in our little party at the City Hall, but we had not been introduced at that time. He very graciously invited us to tour his museum, which housed

much of the history of Bastogne from its founding during Roman times to the present. In addition, there were many items from the memorable siege that took place there in December 1944 when the German Army threatened to take the city. Everything from uniforms to unexploded (empty) 500-pound bombs (& parts of bombs), ration packages, small arms of many types, U.S. and German field equipment, Etal. While there, M. Fergloute asked me for photos of myself, in uniform, and current, for his museum. (It's a real kick in the head to find out that you are now a museum piece !!! What's next?)

That night we stayed at a neat little hotel just across the Belgian border in Pommerloch, Luxembourg. Across the road from the hotel was a very nice restaurant where we bought dinner. (During this whole trip we have never been disappointed with either the accommodations or the food.)

June 25th. We had an appointment to meet with Frank Kieffer, Curator of the WW II Museum in Clervaux, and the welcoming committee from the CEBA organization of Luxembourg at 14:00 at "The Monument of the G.I." So, having a little time, we toured on our own around the beautiful Luxembourg countryside.

We were a little early arriving at Clervaux. What does one do with this extra time? Find a place to have a little refreshment, of course. So, we picked out a nice looking place on the square where we could sit next to a window, have a beer, and watch for Frank. Sure enough, as the time for our appointment drew near, so did our friend. He spotted us through the window of the tavern and, after a short beer for himself, escorted us to the "Monument of the G.I." M. Camille Kohn, President of CEBA, and his committee welcomed us there. It was a pleasant surprise to find two of our Belgian friends, Henri Rogister and Jean-Marie Fosty, representing the CRIBA organization, were there.

After M. Kohn's prepared remarks for the ceremony, John Gatens and myself placed a bouquet at the monument. Then we all retired to the museum where we were treated to a "Vin d'Honor" ceremony and more very nice remarks by M. Kohn. Again we heard words



The Monument of the GI, Clervaux. Identified were: L/R first man front not known; Henri Rogister, Secretary C.R.I.B.A. (Back row); Frank Kieffer (with cap), curator of the Museum; John Schaffner; (back); Camille Kohn, (front with /tie) President C.E.B.A., John Gatens; to his left Tillie Kimmes, CEBA; Jean-Marie Fosty (sweater) back of Fosty and Kimmes is, Dave Ford. The two gentlemen to Ford's right not identified.

expressing the debt to the American soldiers that could never be repaid. We met all those in the party and found that at least two were Americans. One, Joe Dondelinger, had been born in Luxembourg and was back there on a visit. I found that we had much in common in spite of a wide difference in age. Joe is a Professor at Augustinia College in South Dakota, and also an avid modeler. After much chatter, and after we had consumed all the wine, Frank escorted us through the museum. Of course, I was very pleased to be able to see those models that I had built on display. This museum is housed in the, several centuries old, castle. During the *Battle of the Bulge* this town was heavily defended and as a result the castle was severely damaged and burned out. It has been restored to its original appearance and is now a popular attraction for tourists.

The next day, 26th, we met with Frank Kieffer again who guided us around the area of Clervaux and Wiltz where the area saw much fighting. We stopped briefly in the village of Eschweiler where the story of Private George

Mergenthaler came to light. He was the grandson of Otto Mergenthaler, the inventor of the linotype machine. This machine revolutionized the printing industry and made the Mergenthaler family very wealthy. No doubt, young George could probably have pulled strings and stayed out of the military, had that been his way. In December of 1944 his infantry unit was occupying the village of Eschweiler when the *Battle of the Bulge* occurred. The village was over run and captured by the Germans after a fierce firefight. The village was leveled during the battle. All of the buildings, including the church, suffered extensive damage.

When the American Army regained the initiative and re-took the area later, the body of Mergenthaler was found along with others buried in a shallow grave. Since Mergenthaler had become acquainted with the local priest during the brief period of occupation, he was immediately recognized by certain clothing on his body.

When peace finally came to the area the Mergenthaler family provided the financial support for the restoration of the village and the church. The interior of the church is decorated with a large religious mural that depicts young George Mergenthaler's face on one of the figures. Also, there is a colored art-glass window finished with the seal of the U.S. ARMY and the insignia of Mergenthaler's unit.

That day we also visited Dahl, Luxembourg, the site of a battle that resulted in Sgt. Day Turner being awarded the Medal of Honor. This is more a place than a village, only a few houses along the road. Frank introduced us to the family now living in the house there and they graciously invited us in for refreshments of a drink and cookies. Another unexpected pleasure to visit with these folks. Outside, in the yard of the house is a monument to Sgt. Turner flanked by flagpoles that fly the flags of the U.S.A. and Luxembourg. The family living here attends to the monument. They place flowers and fly the flags on every occasion. This American soldier is being remembered.

During this day Frank drove us to a wooded area that contained the remains of a crashed Lockheed Hudson. On the evening of March 20, 1945, this aircraft had been on a secret mission with a crew of four British airmen and three Belgian secret service agents. Details of the event are not available, but the plane was shot down just after midnight, about 12:45 AM. The shoot down was witnessed by the cure of the hamlet of Hupperdange, Father Michel Magerus. About 15 minutes later there was a knock on his door and it was the sole survivor of the Hudson. It was the pilot who landed in his parachute with severely burned hands and face. The bodies of the other six men were recovered from the wreckage and buried there in a small cemetery created just for them. It is a small clearing complete with six monuments and surrounded by parts of the Hudson. On either side is the two engines and outboard wings, with a part of the tail section in the rear. As sacred as a cemetery should be, we saw evidence of vandalism there. The upright blades of the two propellers had been sawn off



At the Eric Urban home. L/r around table: David Ford, Eddie Monfort, John Schaffner, John Gatens. Across from Gatens is Eric Unlian, his wife Pascal (white jacket) and foreground Vincent Gerard's Aunt.

at the hubs. Someone had to really go out of their way to accomplish this disgusting act.

Later, that evening, Frank took us to his home for dinner and showed us his huge collection of military items from WW II. Frank is quite a collector of note and has not only stocked the museum in the castle at Clervaux with his supply of WW II equipment, weapons, and other military items, but has enough at his home to open another museum. I have provided him with about a dozen scale models for display in his WW II Museum in Clervaux. I enjoyed seeing them there and volunteered to make a model of the B-29, "Enola Gay" for Frank. (At this time it is on display in the museum.)

On the 27th Vincent Gerard met us again with another one of his "surprises." We met at McAuliffe Square in Bastogne along with members of the "Conservation Vehicles Group." These fellows were dressed in American G.I. uniforms and were equipped with two U.S. ARMY Jeeps and a 2&1/2-ton GMC truck, "ready for action." After introductions all around we loaded into the vehicles, Gatens in one Jeep, and me in the other, Ford riding with Eddy Monfort, and Mama Girard riding shotgun in the GMC. We then proceeded to drive out through "downtown" Bastogne to Bizory, an area northeast of the Mardasson Monument. Before we got very far my driver asked me if I would like to drive. Of course I accepted, so he pulled over and we changed positions. It was like pulling on an old glove. I think that he was amazed that I could drive his Jeep without clashing the gears.

We did not stop at the Mardasson Monument, but went on a short distance to Bizory and a place known as "Bois de la Paix." Here a woods has been planted in the shape of the logo of UNICEF. The trees appear to be a variety of birch and are planted fairly close together, about every six feet. Each one has an 8X8 post next to it about 18" high. After a short ceremony, a very sensitive speech by Vince Gerard, and a playing of the two (Belgian & U.S.) National Anthems, we were escorted to the trees in row #12. We found that one had an engraved brass plaque on the post with John Gatens name, state, and organization on it and

another one for myself. How can you top that? I was visibly shaken. Just couldn't help it. After being home for several weeks I thought about how lucky I was to have my name here in this ceremonial spot, engraved in brass instead of chiseled into a white marble cross. I still get emotional when I think about it.

The next stop for our little convoy was not very far. We left the road and parked in the wide open area near a school building. Our Belgian drivers were a bit hesitant with what ever was coming next, but then went right to it. One passed around cups and another went into a G.I. pack and produced a bottle of something for making a proper toast. As I remember, we toasted several things, us, them, and to-whom-it-may-concern.

I love these guys. They sure know how to make somebody welcome.

We then drove on to the monument dedicated to the American Indians who participated in the battle as communicators. The Germans who tried to "decode" their Navajo language were totally stumped. Adjacent to this site is a pasture holding about 100 or more American Bison peacefully grazing on what was once a bloody battlefield. We finished this day at the home of Eric Urbain, another model builder, collector of war material, and student of the *Battle of the Bulge*. They had attended our ceremony at the "Bois de la Paix." Eric, his wife, Pascal, and their children entertained us with an excellent supper on their patio. We then spent several hours with them in their home. While still around the table John, Dave, and I entertained the group with an off-key rendition of "Home On The Range." And, they fed us again. (They probably thought that if we were eating we could not be singing.)

Eric also had a friend there who was driving his own 1944 Jeep. I wonder just how many of those vehicles are still on the road. I'm sure that there are more of them in Europe than there are in the U.S.

June 28th. This was our last day to tour and we were on our own (for a change.) We drove around the Luxembourg / Germany borders and spent some time at Hamm Cemetery. These U.S. military cemeteries in Europe are something very special. Just being there

Traveling Europe 1998 - by John Schaffner - 589/A

changes ones attitude about life (and death.) We viewed the grave of Gen. George Patton and noticed that it was separate from the rank and file of the other white marble crosses and stars. He requested to be buried with his men and that was done, but since so many visitors wanted to view his grave they wore a path in the carefully landscaped cemetery. So, the decision was made to place his grave at a more accessible location. While walking the rows, we quite accidentally came on the grave of Medal of Honor recipient, Sgt. Day Turner. Not many days after the application for the award was made Turner was killed in another action.

We drove around Luxembourg City for a short while and then went on to the wine country. It was a beautiful day, the weather being perfect. We stopped at a place on the Moselle River (Remich) for a glass of wine, sat at an outside table and watched the boats go by. From there we drove on and located our hotel at Roeser before dark. We packed our baggage for traveling and after another very nicely prepared supper at the hotel, went to bed fairly early.

29th. We traveled to the Luxembourg Airport, turned in our rental car and boarded our flight to Gatwick where we changed planes for

BWI with no time to spare. On the plane from Gatwick to BWI I was fortunate to be sitting with a Scottish fellow who was a member of the British Army and was traveling to the states with his family to visit friends. We had much to talk about and it made the time pass quickly. The flight home was smooth and without incident and Arline Ford was waiting at the door at BWI.

We give much of the credit for a most enjoyable trip to our European friends in CRIBA (Belgium) and CEBA (Luxembourg.) Their help was essential, no two ways about it. It was also great to have traveled with John & Dave. Dave is our "resident historian" and has toured the battlefield many times. His knowledge of events and places was most valuable.

As of 12 April 1999

J.R.Schaffner 589/A



but you can see the remains of the B Battery, 589th FAB

John Schaffner and John Gatens scrounging for remembrances of 1944 at the B Battery, 589th FAB position near Herzfenn, Germany. See story for details..

BISHOP, ALAN G. 424/L
309 LITTLE FALLS ST
FALLS CHURCH, VA 22046
703-241-1236

BEVILLE, JOHN G. 424/K
36509 TRIPP COURT
FRUITLAND PARK, FL 34731
352-315-4103

BOURG, CHARLES E. 424/HQ 2BN
9915 BAPTIST CHURCH RD
ST LOUIS, MO 63123
314-843-7684

BRASFIELD, PAUL W. ASSOCIATE
(590th FAB)

2242 ST PAUL ROAD
MILLINGTON, TN 38053
901-564-6744

My father (deceased) was, as I learned just recently, a member of the 590th Field Artillery Battalion. I would be interested in hearing from any of you who knew him.

CHRISTIAN, TRUMAN W. 424/D
27 CENTER DRIVE
CAMP HILL, PA 17011
717-763-4871

I met Truman at the Fort Indiantown Gap, *Battle of the Bulge* Re-enactment, in January of this year. He was visiting the show with his son. (I was a guest of Dick Rigatti). Also present, when we met, was Dr. Norman Lichtenfeld, son of Seymour Lichtenfeld, 422/I (who was there with his young son. Christian and I exchanged e-mail addresses and he soon joined the Association.

DELAHUNT, GLENDA ASSOCIATE
(592/B)

627 HANEY ROAD
CARBONDALE, IL 62901

Daughter of John C. Scott, 592/B; See below for his membership.

Glenda bought a *CUB PASSES* in *REVIEW*, and signed on her father John C. Scott, 592/B.

DE MARTEAU, PAUL ASSOCIATE
LEEMSKUILEN 16
2350 VOSSELAAR
BELGIUM

Mr. Collins, Thank you for your recent letter. I am happy to be able to join your organization as an ASSOCIATE member. I am sure it can be very important for the research I am doing on the *Battle of the Bulge*.

KEECH, MRS ANN MARIE
ASSOCIATE

424 CASCADE DRIVE
NEWPORT NEWS, VA 23608

KRIEGS, WILLIAM L. 422/SV
24 STEEPLECHASE DR
RACINE, WI 53402-3647
414-639-3055

LACROIX, ROGER A. 422/UNIT?
627 MONTGOMERY ST APT #1
MANCHESTER, NH 03102
603-622-9681

LATA, WALTER J. 422/H
435 BARRETT ST
HENDERSON, NV 89015
702-564-5368

MOORE, CLAUDE H. 422/SV
MT AIRY ROAD
WAVERLY HALL, GA 31831

I am sending a membership for my ex-father-in-law. Please notify me annually on behalf of Mr. Moore. Signed Deborah Tainsh, Huntington Beach, CA

PETERSON, BARBARA A.
ASSOCIATE (C Battery 589th FAB)

249 COOLIGNON WAY #5A
RIVER VALE, NJ 07675
201-722-2814

E-Mail: Petersonjb@worldnet.att.net

My Great Uncle, Malcom H. Rockwell, Captain, was Battery Commander, C Battery, 589th Field Artillery Battalion. He was Killed in Action on 17 December 1944. My mother and I have been deeply touched by the responses from the men of the 106th Infantry Division Association, C Battery, 589th FAB, who served with him. (This was all made possible by me discovering the 106th Web Site on the Internet, and the responses that I received from John Kline.)

I cannot begin to express my awe and gratitude to the men of the 106th for their

strength, courage and sacrifices during and beyond World War II.

Also, for the record and in his honor, my Grandfather, John W., Rockwell, was also killed in 1944. He was an Army Engineer, Private, in the 373rd Engineer Battalion. He and Malcolm were the only sons of my my Great Grandma Rockwell. Both men are buried in Europe.

SCOTT, JOHN C. 592/B

RFD 2, BOX 616
POPLAR BLUFF, MO 63901-9632
573-785-6508

It is a pleasure to join the 106th Infantry Division Association, along with my Daughter Glenda Delahunt.

STERN, BORIS A. 424/HQ 2BN

3106 LAKE ELLEN DR
TAMPA, FL 33618
813-961-3212

E-Mail: boris.stern@ste.net

Joined the 106th at Camp Atterbury out of my Basic Training, Fort Benning (18 yrs) went over with the group on the *Aquitania*, on line in Belgium 12/12/1944. Pulled off line and promoted to Sergeant on 12/14/1944, Battalion Headquarters in Winterspelt, Germany. Stayed with the 424th all the way, including setting up POW Camps along the Rhine River. I was discharged March 11, 1946. B.S. Chemistry, Illinois Institute of Technology 1950; President Briggs Division, Jim Walter Corporation, 1974-1985; retired 1987. Board member Cherokee Sanford Brick Company, Sanford, N.C.; President, BASCON, Inc, 1990 to present

STONE, PAUL E. 81ST ENG/A

3414 STONE LOOP
HARRISON, ARK 73601

A Life membership for he and his wife

STURDEVANT, WENDELL F. 422/K

510 NO. HENRY ST
CORTEZ, CO 81321
970-565-4115

E-Mail: rsturdev@spacecom.af.mil

A letter from Wendell's son Dr. Rick W. Sturdevant, Colorado Springs, CO: "Enclosed is my check for a LIFE Membership in the 106th Infantry Division Association, for my father, Wendell F. Sturdevant. This is a birthday present to him, from me. My second check is for a copy of *The CUB of the Golden Lion: PASSES in REVIEW*. Please mail it to my home, so I can give it to my father. I am sure my father will enjoy renewing old friendships from World War II..

SZPEK, JR., ERVIN ASSOCIATE (423/I)

620 HARTWELL AVE
WAUKESHA, WI 53186
E-Mail: ESzpekjr@aol.com

Erv is the son of Ervin, Szpek, Sr; 423/I. He has done extensive research on the infamous POW Camp in Dresden, Slaughter House FIVE. He made a couple trips back there to research. I have much material from him, and hopefully will get an opportunity to display some of it for you. (J. Kline, editor)

TEAHAN, JOHN A. 422/K

15445 EVERLY DRIVE
ROSEVILLE, MI 48066
810-775-1892

John, I was a member of the 106th at Fort Jackson, 1943, March through September. Sent to Africa to join the 34th Infantry. I would enjoy being a member of the 106th Infantry Division Association.

VOGEL, JAMES 423/D

603 TYNER STREET
PLANT CITY, FL 33566

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I n M e m o r i a m

Dashner, Robert F. 422/MED

21755 Rein, EastPointe, MI 48021

Margie, Robert's daughter wrote: "My dad passed away on March 6, 1999 from a massive heart attack. He really enjoyed the reunions. He was laid out at Peter's Funeral Home, Groose Point, Michigan and the funeral was held at St. Thecla's Church in Clinton Township. He also enjoyed on all the e-mail letters from your "Bulge-List" group. It made his day when I brought over his e-mails to read."

Fava, Roy 81st ENG/C

45 Doherty Drive, Clifton, NJ 0713-3307

John Gallagher, 81st Engineers phoned to say that Roy passed away April 9, 1999. He is survived by his widow Wanda and several children. Roy met Wanda, who was a student nurse, in Indianapolis while we were at Atterbury. They married and raised a great family.

Gaffney, Frank W. 424/HQ

1756 Lanbury Drive, Kettering, OH 45439-2433

Cub returned - marked "Deceased."

Miedema, Eldon L. 589/A

303 Hillcrest Drive, Holmen, WI 54363-9055

Edward Wojahn, 81st Engineers and a resident of Holmen wrote: "A note that Eldon died February 1, 1999. He was in A Battery, 589th FAB.

Moore, George L. 422/B

80 Memorial Drive, Salem, MA 01970-5652

Gordon Pinney received a letter from George's widow; George died on November 12, 1998. He is sadly missed. He was a POW.

Powell, Robert A. 590/HQ

660 River Oak Court, Salisbury, MD 21801-5366

An e-mail from Betty, George's wife, "Mr. Kline, I know that Bob had some e-mail correspondence with you and wanted you to know he died October 27, 1998, while we were on a Jazz Cruise Ship, Norway. He was a POW Stalag 4-B, POW tag 312253. He was a Communications Sergeant. He wrote an excellent account of his experiences, it really sounds like a carbon copy of the trials suffered by others."

signed *Liz Powell*

Rutt, Robert E. 422/HQ

1283 Desiax, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302-0014

John Gillespie, 422/C, Bloomfield Hills, MI, reports the death of his good friend, Robert Rutt. Date of death February 25, 1999. Rutt a prominent attorney was 80 years of age at his death. Legally blind he went into semi-retirement 10 years ago, but continued to commute by bus to his office in downtown Detroit by bus. Born in Detroit, he attended the University of Detroit and was pursuing his law degree when he took a break to serve in the Army. Lt Robert Rutt was the 422nd Paymaster. He had with him \$15,000 in cash when captured by the Germans. When the Germans took the money from him, he insisted on a receipt because the money was not his. He got one. The article states that such fastidious attention to detail characterized his life in his military and civilian career as an attorney. He was an avid fisherman and world traveler, planning on going to London this Spring. His wife, Lucille, died in 1995. He is survived by seven children, three brothers, two sisters and seven grandchildren.

Saxton, Charles 81st ENG/A

4703 Brookside Avenue, Bristol, PA 19007-2009

Warner Saxton, son of Charles wrote, "My father Charles has passed away and will be sadly missed. Only during the last few years has he started to talk about his experience in World War II. I just found his discharge papers from Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa and will keep them forever. He was laid to rest on his birthday, Monday March 15, 1999 at the age of 75"

Silhavy, Frank V. 424/F

508 W Vine Ave, McAllen TX 78501

February CUB returned marked "Deceased." Phone disconnected. If you know him write. J Kline

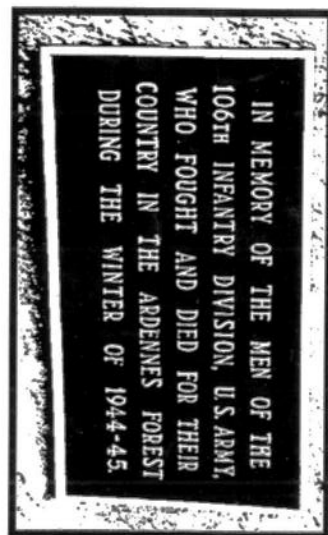
Witt, William E 331 MED/B

Box 27, Elkader, IA 52043-0027

Date of death: January 13, 1999; John Robb, Past-President, was notified by Gertrude, William's Widow. She wrote, "William spent his last year in a nursing home. That *The CUB* was of special comfort to him. He was 82 years old. He had Parkinson's Disease. He is survived by his wife, Gertrude, daughter Mary Lee of Elkader and daughter Ann Marie and her husband Albert Liesson of Waterloo. William graduated from the University of Iowa and the School of Mortuary Science of St Louis, MO. Being a licensed embalmer and funeral director for 57 years. Community Service was very important to him, His family, church and profession were very special to him."

Rest in Peace

Inscription on 106th Inf Div Memorial - St Vith



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