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to join us for the
66th Annual Reunion
 of the
106th Infantry Division Association

at the
Doubletree Hotel
Arlington, VA
 from
September 5 to 9, 2012

For information about the reunion and how to register online
 see pages 41 and 42 of this issue.

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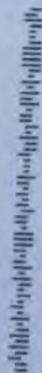


GOLDEN LIONS

Barry F. Martin Jr. — Membership Chairman
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THE ARDENNES • THE RHINELAND • CENTRAL EUROPE

The CUB

PUBLISHED BY AND FOR
 The Veterans of the
 106th INFANTRY
 DIVISION

of the
GOLDEN LION

Vol 68 — No. 2b

May — August 2012

106th Veterans Tour Their 'Old Working Place:' May 12-20, 2012

Submitted by Association Historian John Schaffner (589/A)



Left to right, Golden Lions John Swett (424/G), John Gatens (589/A), and John Schaffner (589/A) are presented with a red rose and school project by Clea, granddaughter and heir apparent to the Auberge du Carrefour at Baraque de Fraiture. Denise Oger, a planner for the ceremony looks on.

Tim Blixt and wife Lori, members of the 106th Association and Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge reached out to Golden Lions John Gatens (589/A) and John Schaffner (589/A) about where they served during the Battle of the Bulge. Tim had discovered MilSpec Tours and contacted their guide, Patrick Hinchey, who is well experienced with guiding tours through the Ardennes and Schnee Eifel. With 24 family members, fellow Golden Lions and friends signed up for a tour; the group left for Europe mid-May 2012.

To read more about how their tour progressed, look for the complete article on p. 14

The CUB

100th Anniversary of the 106th Infantry Division Association, Inc.
A Non-Profit Organization

Total Membership August 1, 2012 = 1,245

Membership includes CUB magazine subscription

Annual Dues are no longer mandatory for Vets/Non-Veterans! Donations accepted

Payable to "106th Infantry Division Association"
in care of **Treasurer** — See address below

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Harry F. Martin Jr.

President's View ...

I cannot believe that a year has slipped by and our next reunion is only a month away at this writing. I am looking forward to seeing you all again. So what has happened to our Association besides getting one year older? Our new by-laws have gone into effect and new blood in the form of our Non-Veteran Associates has assumed responsibilities in order to keep us moving forward. As many of you are aware, many Veterans Groups have had to close up shop due to a lack of new leadership. Thankfully that is not our case as our Non-Veterans; Randy Wood and Tom Hoff, our Editor, William McWhorter and our Publisher, Susan Weiss have all stepped up to take the baton.

This past year the 106th has been well represented by our members at many events including the tour to our old working place, the Ardennes, a recognition gathering for WW II Vets at Barksdale Air Force Base in Shreveport, LA, a POW recognition gathering at the Veterans Hospital and Center in Biloxi, MS., and a meeting of the Military Officers Association of America in Mobile, AL. I also had the opportunity to address the Mighty 8th Air Force Association of South Alabama as to how we lived in foxholes. Even though we are getting a little greyer, aching a little more in our bones, we are still able to get out and proudly represent the 106th.



Sy Lichtenfeld, 422/J
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President 2011-2012
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In closing, I would be remiss not to acknowledge the tremendous job our Adjutant, Murray Stein, has done this past year under the most trying of circumstances in losing his beloved Barbara. Murray is truly the spirit of the 106th. We all wish him well on his forthcoming retirement as our Adjutant. Once again a reminder, we no longer collect dues, but we ask your help for donations to defray the cost of the printing and mailing of *The CUB*.

See you in Washington Sept. 5-9!

Sy



The CUB of the **Golden Lion**

We are in need of a Chaplain for our Reunion!

If you have any thoughts, please reply to Adjutant Murray Stein (423/I) and/or President Sy Lichtenfeld (422/I)

The position of the Association's Chaplain is currently vacant and the Board of Directors would like to hear from any interested members (Division veteran or non-veteran) regarding their desire to serve as a replacement for the 2012-2013 year of service.

Please contact any board member whose contact information is listed on the inside front cover of this CUB.

Shadows of Slaughterhouse Five

From Ervin Szpek, Jr., Non-Veteran Member

Ervin Szpek Jr. (Non-Veteran Member) is pleased to announce after many years of research that his and his colleagues' book on the infamous *Arbeitskommando Slaughterhouse Five* has been released. Nearly every man of this POW work camp (near Dresden, Germany) originated from the 106th Infantry Division including former 106th Association President, Gifford Doozee. The book is their story, in their words, and accounts for nearly every POW at the camp; it also chronicles the recollections and reflections of the 150 American Ex-POWs, many of whom are members of the Association. Newly released by iUniverse press at www.iUniverse.com, the book is also available at www.amazon.com and



www.BarnesandNoble.com. With best wishes for 2011 and with appreciation for your efforts — thank you.

My Brothers,

Our 106th Association celebrates the 66th reunion this September in Arlington, Va. I write this article while watching the 66th Annual Tony Awards in Broadway, N.Y. We should have submitted our 106th Division Story — and what a story we were. And are! Certainly deserving an award for Valor, Courage and Longevity.

We have a continuing important discussion to be held in Arlington — as to "The Future of our 106th Division Association." This has been ongoing now for a number of years. With the change in our By-Laws allowing non-veterans to join the board and vie for elected officer positions, the outcome now rests on the shoulders of our non-veterans, such as Randy Wood, our 2nd V.P. and Tom Hoff on the Board and serving as our Nomination Chairman, I look forward to their comments at the reunion.

This past month, I found amongst my wife Barbara's "keepsakes" a V-Mail from Sgt. Marvin (Sammy) Pate 423/I. Sammy, supposedly, was the first 106th soldier-killed in the Battle of the Bulge, on Dec. 16, 1944. Sgt. Pate and I were shoulder to shoulder, setting up our 60mm mortar gun, when a sniper missed me and killed Sammy. Not having met Barbara, Sgt. Pate wrote (unbeknownst to me) that he felt that he knew her from our conversations, assured her that we would be OK because of how we cared for each other as we went into battle.



Murray Stein, 423/I,
Ex Comm, Adjutant
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We were truly Brothers, and he was never forgotten. "Sammy" ended by asking Barbara to write to his girlfriend back in Texas. I wish I had known!

I have never been more proud of my 106th Brothers, as I am today. I will be presenting choices for our 67th reunion (2013) when we meet in Arlington. I'm confident that we will go on with the help of our non-veterans. More important, is that we need those of us 106s making every effort to be with us in Sept. and with the Guy Upstairs watching over us, let's plan for 2013!

Love ya,
Murray Stein
Adjutant

Golden Lions During World War II—A Photo Article

Requested by: Murray Stein (423/I)

Every so often, I see a picture in *The CUB* of one of us as a young soldier. In a previous issue (Vol. 67—No. 1) I thought it would be fun to have as many of our soldiers' photos as are available, to be published in *The CUB*. Editor William McWhorter agreed to my request to continue this series in subsequent issues of *The CUB*. Look for the photos below and throughout the magazine and keep sending them in!

From Russell D. Hoff (422/M)

Golden Lion Russell Hoff sent in this photo of himself with the 106th Infantry Division at Fort Jackson, SC in the Fall of 1943.



From John M. "Jack" Roberts (589/A)

Golden Lion Jack Roberts submitted this photo taken shortly after he received his battlefield commission as a 2nd Lt. He had recently joined the 589/A Field Artillery Battalion. He had transferred from the 592/C as a S/Sgt cadre member to help the 589/A reorganize after being bitterly trounced during the Battle of the Bulge. He was 20 years of age when he received the appointment. Roberts commented, "I was mighty proud to be recognized for my battle achievement while with the 592/C during the battle as well as when I joined the 589/A on April 1, 1945." Just before the end of the war on May 8, 1945. This photo



appears in the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge roster as well as recorded in the Washington, D.C. World War II National Memorial's Archives.

The CUB of the Golden Lion

The 106th Signal Company at Hünningen

Submitted by 106th Infantry Division Association's Belgium Liaison Carl Womers

Greetings from Belgium! Last summer Carl and Sofie went down to Hünningen. In February 1945 the division CP was at Hünningen. The 424th was pushing the German troops back through the Losheim Gap, into Germany and retaking the positions previously held by the 14th Cavalry and the 99th Infantry Division. Around this time General Stroh took command of the division and Colonel Robert Stumpf became the new commander of the 424th.

Carl thought the readership would enjoy photos of GIs from the 2nd Battalion, 424th Infantry Regiment (two medics and one infantryman), as well as one of an unknown GI from the 106th Signal Company, all taken at Hünningen in February 1945. Carl's lovely new wife Sofia provides a before and after perspective for the photo of the Golden Lion standing in front of the Jeep. Carl does not have their names, but it is his hope that perhaps someone can recognize them.



The CUB of the Golden Lion

From L. Martin Jones (423/G)

In response to Don Beseler's (424/A) photo article on page 5 of the last issue of *The CUB* Vol. 68, No. 1 (shown below), Golden Lion Lloyd Martin Jones of Lawrence, Kansas submitted the following response:

Don Beseler was not sure if Wallace Rifleman was in the 422nd or 423rd Regiment. Rifleman was in Company G of the 423rd. I was a platoon leader in Company G. The other officers were: Captain Edward H. Murray, First Lieutenants Wilbur H. King and Earl W. Browne, and Second Lieutenants David R. Millice and Morris J. Patrizi. I have stayed in contact with Browne who now lives in California. Non-commissioned officers in my platoon included John Parchinski, Lee Darby, Jesse Bishop, Ivon York, and Billy Moore. I have stayed in contact with Darby who now lives in Georgia. I understand that Millice died in a German POW camp. Bishop, York, and Moore returned to the States, but they are now deceased. I have never known what happened to Sgt. Parchinski or Lieutenant Patrizi.

Golden Lion Don Beseler (424/A), in the last issue of The CUB, Vol. 68, No. 1,



submitted this photo, which Mr. Jones has provide comment on above. This photo was taken near Berk, Germany. "This was as far as we got in the drive to the Rhine River. The man on the right side of the picture is 1st Sgt. Wallace Rifleman (423/G). He managed to escape when the 423rd was surrounded. He is deceased. I have no knowledge as to what happened to Burns or Muchams."

MY WAR

by Fredrick Smallwood

This is the story of my experiences as a young boy from a small town in south Georgia with the 106th Infantry Division during World War II. I was initially in the A&P Platoon of 1 Bn. Hq. Co. of the 423rd Regiment. I was one of the few who made my way through the German lines back to the Allied lines at St. Vith.

Books are \$15 plus \$4 for shipping. You can contact me at fwsm@mcbr.com or P.O. Box 1923, Bainbridge, GA 39818.

MY WAR



FREDRICK SMALLWOOD
IN THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE
DURING WWII

The following was received from Martin King who lives in Belgium. I now consider Martin a friend as we have many things in common. Martin co-authored, with Michael Collins, a recently published book titled, *Voices of the Bulge*. It is through the book that I met Martin. He has lived in Belgium for many years and is avidly interested in WW II in Europe and the Battle of the Bulge in particular. He conducts tours of the battleground, does research and produces documentaries, and films on the battle.

As an example of his work in connection with the 106th Division he sent me this interesting bit of information to add to the story of Lt. Eric Fisher Wood, Jr., Executive Officer of A Battery, 589th. It was well known that there was another American soldier's body with Lt. Wood's body when they were discovered later in January 1945 in the area of Meyerode, but I had never seen him identified. Martin writes, "John, The soldier found beside Eric Fisher Wood was named Lehman Wilson, 82nd AB Division." Martin received this information from Eva Maraitte whose family provided temporary refuge for Wood and Wilson in their home at one time during the fighting in the area. Martin also says, "On a sad note... Eva Maraitte passed away on Feb. 7th, 2012, at the age of 92. She was a charming lady for sure!" "By the way, last year I did months of voluntary research for a 106th veteran who attended Valley Forge Military Academy (MA). Eric Fischer Wood, 589/A, was quite a remarkable character. Valley Forge MA invited me to officially open the 'Eric Fisher



John R. Schaffner 589/A,
Historian, Past President 2002-2003
1811 Miller Road, Cookeysville, MD 21030
410-564-2754, pumexim2@verizon.net

Wood Library' there last year and placed my photograph among others on a commemorative plaque at the library. It was a profound honor indeed and one that I'll never forget. I go back a long time with the 106th. The first veteran I ever accompanied around the Bulge some 20 odd years ago was James F. Cooley, D Co 423rd reg. He wanted to retrace his steps and find his Captain's last resting place in Henri Chapelle. James's son Robert still sends me a Christmas card every year."

Attached is the photo in the Valley Forge Military Academy (see page 8). The year is 1986 and has been "history" for a long time now. That year is very significant to me because it was when I attended the Reunion of the 106th Infantry Division Association for the first time. Last year was 25 years later and some things are still the same and some are definitely not. There are still some of the original joiners around, but not many are still attending reunions. I am curious to know just who they are.

I dug out the old CUB issue that covered the 1986 reunion in Columbia and carefully opened those crispy pages. Of 556 people attending, 288 were veterans. The rest were family and friends. The breakdown by unit: 422nd - 89, 423rd - 50, 424th - 62, 589th - 17, 590th - 10, 591st - 23, 592nd - 5, Div, Arty - 2, 81st Eng - 21, 331st Med - 2, MP Co - 2, Signal Co - 2, and Div Hq - 3. The above came from 38 states and 1 from Canada and 1 from France. If you were included in the count, stand up. And, when you attend in September bring your families and friends. This organization is no longer strictly just for us old veterans. We must break in the younger generation to carry on. The CUB then, as now, was and is the glue that sticks us all together. Without it we can fold the tent. We are so fortunate to have William and Susan, who have picked up the ball from John Kline and are running with it. They are dependent on you, yes, you, for material to publish. Don't be shy about sending them stuff about your experience as a soldier, or



Valley Forge Military Academy's 'Eric Fisher Wood Library,' where John Schaffner's photograph, among others is placed within a commemorative plaque.

even personal things that you would like for all of us to know.

Finally, I would like to add that nominations for the Award of The Golden Lion are made, according to our by-laws, by those who have already received it. If there is someone that you believe has earned the Award please write the citation and forward it to me through a past recipient.

John Schaffner, Chairman
Golden Lion Award Committee

Order of the Golden Lion Committee

John Schaffner has been named the new Chairman of the Order of the Golden Lion Committee. Mr. Schaffner invites all those who have received a Golden Lion award to send any nominations to him at:

John Schaffner (589/A)
1811 Miller Rd., Cockeysville, MD 21030-1013
410-584-2754
pumexim2@verizon.net

Treasurer, Harry F. Martin Jr. (424/L) asked the staff of *The CUB* to inform the readership that, while dues are no longer necessary, the Association is very appreciative of *any* donation it receives. For the Association to be able to meet not only yearly expenses, these donations make possible the enjoyable time at each Annual Reunion. Please consider donating to the Association.

Please report all changes of address and deaths to:
Association Treasurer and Membership Chairman:

Harry F. Martin Jr. (424/L)

121 McGregor Avenue Mt Arlington, NJ 07856

Phone: 973-663-2410 E-mail: hmartin19@aoptonline.net

Association Membership As of August, 2012

Total Membership	1,245
Veterans members	831
Non-Veterans members	414

MEMORIAL DONATIONS:

Robert Faro, Non-Veteran

*In honor of Thomas D. Reda (422/
Med)*

Dolores Mikalauskis, Non-Veteran

*In honor of her husband John
Mikalauskis (424/H), who passed
away on December 30, 2010*

Paul Thompson, member

In honor of the 106th Recon

John F. Chanler, member

*"In honor of my long departed blood-
brother Anthony "Teno" Chanler (FAB
592/D) and my recently departed brother-
friend, Edgar R. Carpenter (81st Eng B).
God Bless all of their 106th brothers."*

Wilma Wood and family

In loving memory of Barbara Stein

Newt (423/HQ), Ruth and Susan Weiss
In memory of Barbara Stein

Newt (423/HQ) and Ruth Weiss
*In memory of Charles (591/SF)
and Nancy Dane*

Mary Jo Fletcher
*In memory of her husband,
Ben Fletcher (81st ENG)*

Joe Salerno (DIV/HQ)
*In memory of former S/Sgt. "Kelly"
Parkinson, "a faithful brother-in-arms, the
last member of my platoon of whom I was
aware. He helped train me as an infantry
rifeman and leader; a real brother in
combat and suffered together with blood
and captivity on December 19, 1944.
May he rest in well deserved peace."*

Jeff Arvold
*Son of Norman B. Arvold (424/B),
in his memory*



From the editor of *The CUB of the Golden Lion*

Hello, my name is William A. McWhorter and I am the editor of *The CUB of the Golden Lion* (*The CUB*). I am an admirer of your outfit and hope that I can assist in keeping open the lines of communication for our Association. Please send news items that you would like reviewed for potential inclusion in upcoming issues of *The CUB* to me. Whenever possible please send them to my email address (williammcwhorter17@gmail.com).

Just a reminder . . .

If you have pictures and information you would like included in a future *CUB*, the due dates are as follows:

- For the edition that comes out in DECEMBER each year — to include pictures from the reunion — all material is due by OCTOBER 9
- For the edition that comes out in APRIL each year all material is due by FEBRUARY 15
- For the edition that comes out in AUGUST each year all material is due by JUNE 15

Articles and pictures can be mailed or emailed to:

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The Lion's Path

By C.J. Kelly

In December 1944, a raw American infantry division has its baptism of fire in the Battle of the Bulge. Caught up in this maelstrom of death and destruction are two very different Americans. Trapped behind enemy lines, they experience the horror of war and a humanity borne of sacrifice.

Available at Amazon.com or barnesandnoble.com

Jim West and the *www.IndianaMilitary.org* Website

Non-Veteran member Jim West has created an excellent Web page at the following address: <http://www.indianamilitary.org/106th/Cubs-106/InfoRequest.htm>

It is hoped that this new webpage will increase awareness of the 106th Infantry Division Association and perhaps our membership. Check it out at your earliest convenience. To join the Association visit: <http://tinyurl.com/join106th>

Jim West has been adding photos to the website's roster. He is nearly finished going through all the old issues of *The CUBs* and will start adding names from other sources, such as the Camp Atterbury Photo Album. However, he will not be able to find every veteran's photo without your help. If you visit his website, listed above, and a photo is not shown for an individual, and the family has one available, all they need do is email him a scan. Preferably a single person and not in a large group, and accurately identified. You can email Jim West at his new email address jimwest@centurylink.net.

Jim would like to thank the AmVets of Indiana! Through their generosity of support and hosting of the entire website, they are making it possible for the 106th to have a presence on the Web.

Camp Atterbury's Museum Moves

Submitted by Jim West

Colonel Stachel, former Installation Commander of Camp Atterbury, President of the Museum Board and a close friend, advises me that the Museum has now been moved outside of the fenced cantonment area. This means that the Museum should be open during normal business hours, and ID will not be required to gain entrance.

The new location is directly across from the Main Gate, on the North side of Hospital Road. The modern building

was formerly used as a women's prison. It sits on the 1,200 acres recently restored to Camp Atterbury where they will be building several two-story brick buildings, brigade size.

They plan to have a Grand Reopening during their annual re-dedication ceremonies on August 3. The following Sunday, August 5, is the annual Italian POW Picnic located at the Chapel in the Meadow.



106th Veterans Tour Their 'Old Working Place' May 12-20, 2012

Submitted by Association Historian John Schaffner (589/A)

Cover Story

I know, here I am making that last trip again. You all know how it is, the years creep up, and one just doesn't do all those things one did without thinking twice. Well, it happened this way. This fellow, who is a friend of John Gatens (589/A), wanted to travel to Europe in the area where the 106th saw action during the Battle of the Bulge. I now introduce you to Tim Blixt and wife, Lori, who are also members of the 106th Association and Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge (VBOB). Tim especially wanted to make a tour with John Gatens, and me, along to talk about where we had been during the battle. Tim had discovered MilSpec Tours and contacted their guide, Patrick Hinchy. Patrick was experienced with guiding tours though the area of the Ardennes and Schnee Eifel and there was interest with enough people to

make up a group for a tour. Also, we were to have the company of Doug Mitchell, an American living in Grosslangenfeld, and a member of the 106th Association. Doug is a photo-journalist and would accompany us on the tour for documenting our experience. All of this sounded good, especially since my three kids and a grandson chimed in and said that they were interested. So, nobody had to hold a gun on me to get me to sign us up. I was committed. It was a rare and special opportunity for us to meet again with those folks that I now consider an extended family. There is no substitute for being there. Among those to sign up are a few familiar names to our Association. John A. Swett (424/G) came with two daughters and a grandson. Barney Mayrhoon (81st ENG/A) was with us for a few days with his friend from Paris, Jacques Klein.



Bourgmestre Elie Deblire presents baskets of gifts and Certificates of Honorary Citizenship of the Commune of Vielsalm to 3 veterans: Swett, Schaffner, and Gatens.

The CUB of the Golden Lion

We had three gentlemen with us who are old friends and live in my neighborhood. Their interest was in the history of the battle. Wayne Dunn's father was Captain Thomas Dunn, Company Commander of 423/H. The other two were Bob Mullauer and Frank Armiger, both military historians and friends as well. All of us have been living the good life and, except for those who had lost family and friends during the war, had probably not given much thought about life in Europe then and now. Twenty-two were signed up for the whole week, plus Barney and Jacques for two days.

Off To Europe

The flight to Brussels was uneventful for me. That's the way I like flying, no surprises. Flying all night and arriving early the next day is a bit trying, but one can adapt. The weather in Brussels was sunny, but rather cool. Warm clothing was needed. So, after getting established in the Novotel Hotel, most of the tour group used public transportation into downtown Brussels to sight see the old city. Next day, Monday 14th, we boarded our bus for the first real day of the tour. The first stop was at Thimister-Clermont to visit the "Remember '39-'45 Museum." We were warmly welcomed by the owners/curators, Mathilda and Marcel Schmetz. They are now old friends to some of us. Hugs and kisses were in order. We were seated at long tables and Mathilda related what had happened there while under Nazi control and how the museum came about after the end of the war. She then treated us to a nice lunch before guiding us through the museum. The collection of items is always perma-

nent with "M&M." They never give up anything that has been given to them or that they have collected from the veterans. The U.S. 1st Infantry Division fought in this area and some of the items here are those left behind when that division moved on. Many items have been donated since by the 106th Infantry Division, and other veterans who have visited the museum. Marcel is a master mechanic and artist and has constructed



Four 106th veterans at Henri Chapelle Cemetery. L-R: J. Swett, J. Gatens, J. Schaffner, and Barney Mayrhoon.

the dioramas and exhibits himself. His latest contributions are a full scale M-10 Tank Destroyer and a full scale V-1 Buzz Bomb. Even a close inspection does not reveal that they are made of wood. All American veterans who visit the museum are honored with their own memorabilia by leaving their name on the side(s) of a Red Ball Express semi-truck and photos made when in uniform for display. The very uniform that John Swett wore neatly dressed a manikin. Donations of any WW II items from veterans are always welcome as well. We didn't have enough time here. Of course, we never do.

continues on page 16

The CUB of the Golden Lion



Four 106th Veterans at grave of 1st Lt. Eric F. Wood, Jr. stand while Superintendent Bobby Bell reads the citation for Lt. Wood.

On to Henri Chapelle American Military Cemetery

We departed our friends, "M&M," and drove next to Henri Chapelle American Military Cemetery. At the cemetery we were greeted by the Superintendent, Bobby Bell, and his staff. The U.S. Air Force Color Guard under the leadership of SSGT, Estupinan from Spangdahlem Air Force Base were also there waiting for us to participate. They were sharp! Arrangements had been made for supplying us with a wreath for the monument honoring all who rest there and a special flower arrangement for the grave of 1st Lt. Eric F. Wood, Jr. We 589th FAB veterans gave homage to our lieutenant who we consider a genuine hero. Also we made a visit to the grave of Captain James L. Manning who was Barney Mayrho's C.O., and paid our respects there. While at the grave sites we were apparently observed by two USAF A-10 "Wart Hog" attack airplanes from the Air Base. They circled around us twice at low level and then flew off wagging their wings. It is my feelings that it is something

they do spontaneously whenever they observe people in the cemetery. Also at the cemetery was our Belgian friends, Denise Oger and Anne-Marie Noel-Simon from CRIBA, and a USAF photographer and reporter team from the news media at Spangdahlem Air Force Base. It is always a solemn experience to visit the cemetery, but also it is something that we are drawn to do. There are 7,992 graves in Henri Chapelle American Military Cemetery, five are those of men of the 589th FAB; MSGT Preston Hill, Pvt. Kenneth H. Garrett, 1st Lt. Eric F. Wood, Jr., Pvt. Wallace Godwin, and Capt. Malcolm H. Rockwell.

Arriving at Aachen

The weather was clear and cool and our first-timers had an opportunity to observe from the bus what a lovely countryside Belgium has. That evening we arrived in one of the oldest cities in Europe, Aachen. In 1944, this was the first major city in Germany to fall to the Allies after bitter fighting. Here is where we spent the night at the Hotel Mercure Aachen Europaplatz, Tuesday May 15 our bus carried us southward through the border country where the Sixth Panzer Army attacked on December 16th. The



The Schaffner family with our hostess Denise Oger (red coat) L-R Bob, Denise, Jeanne, Dad, John (Grandson), Paul.



A short stop to inspect the "Dragon's Teeth" installed along the West Wall (Siegfried Line) Holland to Switzerland.

route followed inside the Westwall, as Hitler named it, or, later referred to as The Siegfried Line. We were able to dismount from the bus and inspect the "Dragon's Teeth," close up and appreciate what a formidable obstacle it was for armor and vehicles to cross. However once the enemy was driven from the area tanks fitted with bulldozer blades covered them over. This defensive border extended from Holland in the north to Switzerland in the south and was reinforced with bunkers at strategic points all along the route, about 400 miles. The Sixth Panzer Army's opening offensive was in the front south from Aachen. We traveled down the line of the Westwall past Monschau, Camp Elsenborn, Bullingen, Malmédy, and St. Vith to Clervaux. The route to Clervaux is picturesque, to say the least. It seems that we are usually following a ridge line that affords a panoramic view on both sides of the road. The villages and towns we pass through are just as shown in the tourist brochures. They all appear to be ancient, but in areas where they were fought over most buildings are no more than about 65 years old. When re-built, the original

plans and designs were followed, at least to the outside. Centuries ago most every town grew up surrounding a castle. Many of these old disintegrating structures are now being restored. Some will be tourist attractions and/or B & Bs. In any case they are interesting to view as a way of life that is now ancient history.

Arriving at the "Quiet Front"

Traveling southward still we come to the region that was attacked by the German Fifth Panzer Army. The lines here were thinly defended by the 9th Infantry Division on the north flank, the 14th Cavalry Group between them and the 106th Infantry Division, and on the southern flank the 28th Division was in place. The front extended about 60 miles. This area was considered by higher headquarters as a "quiet front" where nothing happened or was expected to happen. Therefore these units were spread exceptionally thin and some places were not defended at all. Looking at it today in beautiful weather and fully restored it is hard to visualize what happen here in the winter of 1944-45. We arrived at Clervaux, Luxembourg, mid-afternoon, a town that I have visited several times. It too was devastated during the battle. After registering at the Hotel International we all assembled at the square near The Statue of the GI where we were officially greeted by the President of Cercle D'Etudes Sur La Bataille Des Ardennes, Camille Kohn. We heard a very nice welcoming speech, performed a wreath laying ceremony at the statue, and then moved off into the old castle.

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Once inside we were ushered into a large conference room where M. Kolb explained the situation of Luxembourg during occupation by the Nazis and the hard fought battle that took place there. That was followed by wine all around and toasts to the Liberators.

The castle was severely damaged during the fighting but has been painstakingly restored to its former glory. The castle now houses two museums, one dedicated to the actions of WW II and the other to the Ages of Man. Both are administered by the town 'fathers.' We then had the opportunity to browse through the WW II Museum and examine the many artifacts and displays dedicated to the memory of all those who fought for liberty in Luxembourg. Until he passed away in March 2012, Frank Kieffer was the prime collector and curator of this WW II Museum. He will be missed by many of us who knew him personally. Our dinner was presented about 7:30 at the Hotel International. A real pleasant surprise was to find Bernadette Lejeune with us. Bernadette is that special person who manages the Auberge du Carrefour at Baraque de Fraiture. She is most generous with her treatment of the 106th Infantry Division veterans who visit there. More about Bernadette and her family later.

Our Old Working Place

Wednesday, May 16th was another cool day and we expected to cover the area occupied by elements of the 106th Infantry Division when the attack by the Fifth Panzer Army occurred. Those were the first of many critical days to follow. We stayed on the road but made stops where we could point out

positions where various units were on the 16th and pin point locations of the 589th Artillery Batteries. As best we could, John Gatens and I talked about our first experience under fire at a place known as Herzferu. If one would scan the ground here with a metal detector he would not be strong enough to carry away all of the shell fragments he would



Returning veterans of the Bulge are always treated with sincere affection. Pictured are Bernadette Lengler-Lejeune and John Gatens.

discover. We were able to point out the approximate locations where the Germans accepted the surrender of most of two regiments of the 106th after they were caught in a pincer without resupply or means to carry on the fight. We drove to the town of Bleialf, not very far (by bus,) where many of the American prisoners spent a day and night herded into the church courtyard. John Swett was one, and he described his experience here to the group. The Hotel Waldblick in Bleialf expected us for lunch and it was only walking distance from the church. (I was very pleased to find a good friend there, Ed Lapotsky, who lives in Germany. Ed is ex-82nd Airborne Division and very active in

several veteran organizations. We became acquainted with Ed some years ago on other trips and have also met in the States on special occasions. Before we parted Ed presented me with a bottle of fine Mosel wine and a challenge coin honoring the C-47 Club of the 82nd AB Association.

After our lunch at the hotel we visited Grosslangenfeld, home the Reusch family and our friend and companion for the tour, Doug Mitchell. We had the opportunity to meet Doug's wife, Anita, who served up dessert for the group, a delicious apple cake that was made by her mother. It is a shame everyone didn't get a piece. We then walked a short distance to the village church where there is a monument dedicated to both the German and American soldiers who fought over the village during those days of December 1944. (See *The CUB*



Three veterans present flowers at 106th Division Monument in St. Vith.



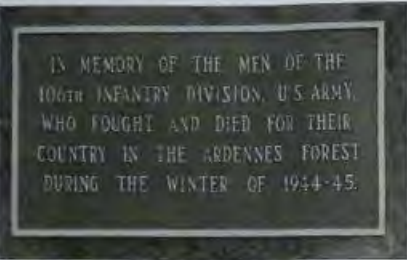
The solemn ceremony at this monument included the USAF Color Guard from Spangdahlem AB.

Issue Vol 61, No 2, Jan-Mar 2005). The church, which is centuries old, was opened up for our inspection as well. Everyone had a chance to go inside and look around. We also examined the monument erected in memory of the bitter fighting that occurred here between the 106th Division Reconnaissance Troop and the German 62nd Volksgrenadier Division. The Germans suffered heavy losses and took the town only after the Americans ran out of ammunition and pulled out.

The Wereth 11 Monument, St. Vith, and more honors

We visited the memorial at Wereth, a place where another atrocity occurred during the battle. Anne-Marie and Denise were there to provide an orientation of what happened to eleven soldiers from the 333rd Field Artillery Bn. when they sought refuge in one of the local houses. They were soon discovered by the advancing Nazi troops, herded outside to the road and brutally murdered. A monument

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IN MEMORY OF THE MEN OF THE
106TH INFANTRY DIVISION, U.S. ARMY,
WHO FOUGHT AND DIED FOR THEIR
COUNTRY IN THE ARDENNES FOREST
DURING THE WINTER OF 1944-45.

The 106th Infantry Division Memorial plaque in St. Vith.

one 3/4-ton Weapons Carrier parked in front and re-enactors in U.S. uniforms we knew then it had to be special. We were ushered into the Community Hall of Manhay for another welcoming speech by the Bourgemestre, Elie Deblire, and presented with gifts including the Coat of Arms of Manhay and a certificate declaring we three veterans

as Honorary Citizens of the Commune of Vielsalm. It was another delightful time to meet again with our friends and be so honored. We remember that the honor is accepted on behalf of all GIs who were not with us on this day. When we departed Manhay we vets accepted rides in the Jeeps. Our convoy drove to Grandmenil with sirens blaring, declaring, "The Yanks are back!" At Grandmenil we stopped and dismounted to inspect the Panzer Mark V Panther tank that is installed on a concrete pad for display. Except for the tracks being damaged it looks to be in fairly good shape.



Bernadette presented the dessert after the luncheon. Note the personalized chocolate bars with WW II photos of the three GIs.



Our hosts at Parker's Crossroads. Bernadette and Claude with Schaffner and Gatens.

Parker's Crossroads

Returning to our Jeeps again we headed back down the road toward Baraque de Fraiture, making a brief stop along the way to inspect another monument. While dismounted, one of the re-enactors produced a canteen and passed around some small cups to a few of us older guys. He carefully poured each of us something that didn't look like water, didn't smell like water, but, after toasting each other, we found out it didn't taste like water. So, just to make sure, we toasted the Jeeps, and all present. Thus fortified, we got back on the road and drove the rest of the way to Baraque de Fraiture. Upon our arrival at the crossroads we found that another crowd had assembled to greet us. Again, the USAF Color Guard, this time under S/Sgt. Paul, was present. We three "Johns" were again greeted by the local officials, participated in a memorial ceremony at the site of the 105-mm Howitzer, and were presented with gifts, and honored once again. We all then went inside the Auberge du Carrefour to a lavish sit-down luncheon. The food and wine were excellent as always and we were catered to by Bernardette's able staff just like it was going to be our "last meal." It was like a family reunion with

our friends from all around the Ardennes area. Later around 6:30 pm the tour left the Crossroads to visit Bastogne and the Mardasson Monument that honors all American units that were involved in the Battle of the Bulge. Bernadette and Denise and Anne-Noel insisted that John Gatens, me, and our families stay at the Auberge. "Don't worry," they said. "We will get you back to your hotel later." So, we stayed and watched the bus depart. No problem, more food and wine were put before us until we couldn't eat or drink any more. We were their honored company until about 10 pm when they put us in a taxi and sent us off into the night to Clervaux. Bastogne will have to wait until next time for us.



USAF Color Guard at Baraque de Fraiture.

American Military Cemetery (Hamm) in Luxembourg City

Friday May 18, 2012 our tour guide, Patrick, arranged for us to travel to the American Military Cemetery (Hamm) in Luxembourg City. Again we performed a wreath laying ceremony accompanied by the USAF Color Guard, led by S/ Sgt. Williams and also members of the organization known as U.S. Veterans

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Friends, Luxembourg A.S.B.L. One of our tour members, a war orphan, was Vicki Cool whose father, Pvt. Victor LaCount, was buried at this cemetery. We attended a service at his grave where again, flowers were placed and a notice hung on the marble cross indicating that the family had visited. Here is where the three veterans of the 106th Infantry Division were presented with certificates recognizing us with the Medal of Honor and a medal to go with it. The presentation was made by Constant Goergen, Honorary President of the above organization. The tour group also visited the grave of General George S. Patton where the cemetery superintendent delivered a moving speech of the life of General Patton and how much his memory is revered in Luxembourg. We made a noon-time stop in downtown Luxembourg City for a light lunch and walk around. It is a fascinating city and I would like to spend more time there (As a side note, English is spoken most places in Europe so a tourist can get about with confidence.)

Military Museum in Diekirch

The next stop on our tour was the huge Military Museum in Diekirch administered by Roland Gaul. This is certainly one, if not the, largest collections of military materials used during WW II in Europe. We spent the rest of the afternoon absorbing more information than we could possibly remember about life in the opposing armies. Mr. Gaul gave a few of us a quick look inside the library of several thousands of books written about WW II. Our timing placed us back in Clervaux in time to freshen up

for another great dinner at the Hotel International. We were pleasantly surprised to find our old friend, Vincent Gerard, and his mother, Anne, waiting for our arrival. Vince has been a gracious host to many visiting veterans in past years. It was nice to reminisce of past visits to the battlefield with Vince. Saturday, 19 May was our final day together.



Three GIs presented with the Medal of Honor from the U.S. Veterans Friends, Luxembourg A.S.B.L. by Constant Goergen, Honorary President.

Remembering Prisoners of War

We departed Clervaux following as close as was practical the route taken by the American POWs on their trek to a prison camp. They marched from Auv, Bleialf, Pruem, and other places in the area to Gerolstein. Gerolstein was a rail junction and a place where some POWs were jammed into 40 & eight boxcars and others were marched off, walking to their destinations, sometimes several hundred miles. Many made their next "home" at Stalag XII-A in Diez, near Limburg, Germany. Our guide, Patrick, directed the driver and we found what we were looking for. This was where Stalag XII-A once was, but today there is no trace of it. Instead

there is a German Army base. Of course, it is fenced in with a formidable gate blocking the entrance. Patrick beckoned to the guard on duty and after explaining that we had ex-pow's on board and that this site was once their prison, the guard agreed to conduct us on a brief tour of the base. Yes, there is absolutely no trace of a prison camp. On passing through the gate again to leave we received a snappy salute from the sentry. Nice finish. We hit the road again for Frankfurt and our last night in the Sheraton Hotel, actually in the confines of the huge Frankfurt Airport. Patrick had intended to tour us through the old city but we were diverted by police. Later we found out that the center of Frankfurt was jammed by a several thousand person "Occupy" group. It seems that they had shut down downtown traffic. We proceeded to the airport instead. Our accommodations were in walking distance to the United Airlines check-in. This is a really large facility housing not only the airport but all brands of hotels, eating places, and shops. We found a nice German style restaurant and settled for a schmitzel, what else?

Returning to the States

And so, as the sun slowly settles in the west we prepare for our flight the next day. It has been a fast week. There were no drop outs, and we did all that we set out to do and much more. The plane rides are long and boring, but that is a part of going anywhere. It beats whatever is second best. Thanks are beyond just, "Thanks," and go to our very capable guide, Patrick Hinchy, who made all of our arrangements



John Gatens is presented with the Certificate of Honorary Citizenship by Jacques Gennin, Conseiller communal et ancien Deputé wallon, assisted by Eddy Monfort, back to camera.

for us, our driver, Joorg, who safely delivered us through traffic and narrow streets that must have been a bus driver's nightmare, and Doug Mitchell, who provided much information about the region we traveled and documented our journey. It was a great group to travel with, everyone was compatible and friendly. Our great friends in Belgium, Luxembourg, and Germany were so gracious and entertained us to the nth degree. I hope that it will be possible to do it again.

Post Script

According to John Schaffner and John Gatens, Patrick Hinchy, the guide and coordinator for the recent battlefield tour did a great job, satisfying the group's every need and expectation. They welcome his desire to be a member of the 106th Infantry Division Association.

And a note from Patrick Hinchy (Ardenne and Schnee Eiffel Tour Guide)

Please may I say to you both (John Schaffner and John Gatens) and through you to our other veterans John Sweet and Barney Mayrsohn and everyone

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else in our group what a great pleasure and privilege it was for me to plan and guide the 106th Infantry Division tour of your Bulge battlefields in May 2012. What was particularly moving was when we met up with your local friends over there. I can truthfully say that I have rarely come across such warmth and affection from so many people, as you 106th veterans, your family members and friends received. A word to the younger generations of your families. This strong bond of friendship with your Belgian friends is something unique and very special to you which you are so lucky to have and which will last over the generations. Do nurture it. It's a wonderful way to remember and honor the veterans after they are gone.

I am delighted to tell you that I would like to come to the 106th Infantry

Division Association Reunion in Arlington, VA in early September. What is more, when I am next in Belgium, I am going to see if I can persuade some of the 106th's Belgian friends to come with me also to the Reunion. Your magazine *The CUB of the Golden Lion* is one of the best produced veterans magazine that I have seen. Long may it continue. The photo on Page 7 of the last issue, Jan / Apr. 2012 particularly interested me. It shows Donald Cooley (423rd) liberated on April 20, 1945 by soldiers of 104th Infantry Division. The road sign shows "Delitzsch 11 kms". I have undoubtedly been right by here, since the 104th's Divisional HQ was in a chocolate factory in Delitzsch which I took their veterans to see.

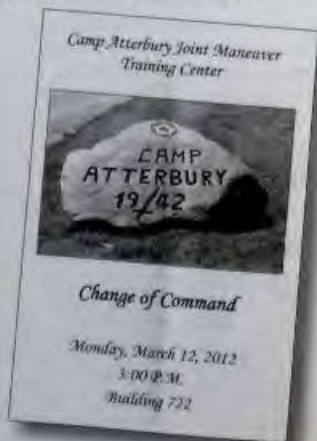
I very much look forward to seeing you all in September. Best wishes, Patrick

Camp Atterbury Change of Command Ceremony

Submitted by Frank S. Trautman (422 D)

Golden Lion Frank Trautman had the opportunity to represent the 106th Infantry Division on March 12, 2012 at a Changing of the Command Ceremony at Camp Atterbury, Indiana. According to Mr. Trautman, the outgoing commander, Colonel Todd D. Townsend had a great interest in the history of the 106th Infantry Division. On numerous previous occasions that Mr. Trautman attended at the post, the Colonel would bring up some question concerning the history of our Division.

Cover of the Camp Atterbury, March 2012
Change of Command Ceremony Program



Mom & Pop: Those Two Little Three-Letter Words

Submitted by Murray Stein (424/I)

In December 1970 Golden Lion Murray Stein wrote the following letter about his parents shortly after their passing. He would like to share it with the readership of *The CUB*.

Mom & Pop.

How many times have we spoken those two beautiful words? How many times have we written a letter and started with those two little 3-letter words that encompass the whole world? How fortunate we were to be able to call and say "Hello Mom - Hello Pop?" How unfortunate that we never truly appreciated this phenomenon of life that gives joy and comfort to us all, until that time for each of us when there is no Mom & Pop — to call, to write to, to speak with, to sit with, to pray with, to enjoy with —. How lonely life will be at times now without them — Who to call — to share a special joy — to help ease a disappointment. To lighten a heavy heart — This parting is so final, it weights me down. Yet, there they are — Mom & Pop. Frail little mom, always worrying about us. Tall distinguished Pop, depending on his religion to watch over us. Two extraordinary people whose whole world was the children. The end of an era — of a special breed. The world will surely miss them and their kind! They will never reappear. These beautiful immigrants! These lovely people! How sad — how I wish I could see Mom & Pop again. Murray

Prisoner's Odyssey

by Herb Shearer (422/G)

Prisoner's Odyssey is a story of survival, hunger and reflection from a teenaged prisoner of war inside Germany near the end of WWII. From capture at the Battle of The Bulge to the final escape from his German guards, Herb Shearer allows us a glimpse into the despair and agony of being a prisoner in a foreign land. During World War II, Herb Shearer served as a private first class in Company G, 422nd Regiment of the 106th Infantry Division. After receiving ASTP training at University of Alabama, he joined the 106th at Camp Atterbury in Indiana where he earned Expert Rifleman honors and was designated Co. G Sniper and Regimental Scout. Fifty years later he recalls his experience.

Available through Barnes & Noble, Amazon.com and Xlibris online.



THE BATTLE FOR SNOW MOUNTAIN

by Donald Young

The Battle for Snow Mountain is a comic novel — based on Young's experience — which gives a surreal picture of the German attack on the 106th Division in the winter of 1944.



The story deals with two soldiers, their odd love affairs at home, their war experience in the Battle of the Bulge, their accidental capture, escape from POW camp, and return to freedom.

"I've never read a more powerful WW II novel than *The Battle for Snow Mountain*."

JOHN DIZIKES, FORMERLY PROFESSOR
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA CRUZ

"Young's novel is an instant war classic, much like Vonnegut's *Slaughter House Five* and Heller's *Catch 22*."

WALLACE WOOD, BOOK REVIEWER

The Battle for Snow Mountain by Donald Young
can be purchased by April 1, from Pocol Press, 6023 Pocol Drive,
Clifton, VA 20124, 1-703-830-5862.

It can also be ordered at Amazon.com, \$17.95, ISBN 978-1-929763-48-1

My 2005 Return to the Battlefields of Europe

Submitted by Jim Forsythe (424/A)

Golden Lion Jim Forsythe submitted the following articles and photos from a 2005 Western European Battlefield tour he took. Also along for the tour was Luan Walker. In the photo associated with this article, Mr. Walker is standing near the site where he came ashore on the Normandy Beach on D-Day, June 6, 1944. Mr. Walker was one of the few that survived the invasion then fought and lived through the onslaught against horrific odds until the defeat and surrender of Germany in 1945. I saw Luan Walker as the epitome of thousands of courageous young men that saved the world from becoming Nazi Territory. While on the tour of the Normandy Battlefield, myself and others on the tour recognized that Luan needed



Jim Forsythe (424/A) at the Henri Chapelle American Cemetery, June 2005 wreath laying ceremony.

some space and time to himself to re-live his memories of the Longest Day, more than sixty years ago. I was proud and honored to associate with this Great American, that, "I helped him Cry."

I was highly honored to be asked to place a wreath at the monument of the Henri Chapelle Cemetery near Clements, Belgium, where over eleven thousand Americans are buried. Most of these soldiers were just out of high school, and barely more than 18 years of age; "allowed" to make the maximum sacrifice, yet not old enough to vote. I was so honored to be apart of this wreath laying ceremony, the expression on my face tells the rest of the story.



Luan Walker standing on the Normandy Beach in June 2005.

NEW CD #5 due out Next Year

Jim West and John Schaffner are once again undertaking the huge task of putting together another CD containing more of the history and stories of the

106th Infantry Division.

If you still have a story to tell, contact either of these gentlemen and let your tale be told.

Douglas Colby Elms Received the French Legion of Honor

Submitted by Liz Erb, the daughter of Douglas Elms

On Dec 10th 1944, a small band of brothers, separated from command by the constant barrage from Nazi Panzer divisions and Field Marshal Von Rundstedt's Volks Grenadiers, managed to pull off one of the most decisive and important battles of WW II, which turned the tide of victory in our favor and halted the German onslaught, bringing about the end of Hitler's reign.

These young men, whose average age was 19, had come from various training units of the military, hurriedly brought together at Camp Aterbury, Indiana for minimal infantry training before being sent to Camp Myles Standish, Massachusetts. From there, these raw recruits of the newly formed 424th Regiment, 106th Division boarded the HMS Aquitania, and headed for Greenock, Scotland.

Upon arrival, they traveled by train to South Hampton, England where they were loaded onto LSTs and set out for the beaches of Normandy. As they are preparing to land at Utah Beach,



Elms holding the Military Shadow Box made by Grant Erb.



Elms in uniform.

suddenly and without warning, they are rerouted to Pointe Du Hoc where they disembark on the banks of the river Seine. From here, the men are immediately loaded into waiting trucks and after two days of travel in the bitter cold, are delivered to the area which for all time will be known as the Battle of the Bulge.

After hearing the stories of WW II from her father over many years, daughter Elizabeth began an intensive research project to explore the many facets of her father's military career. Upon discovering corroborative evidence regarding her father's stories, the search began in earnest to acquire the medals and awards to which her father was entitled. After many years of research, phone calls, letters, emails, etc., the recognition so richly deserved, began to filter in.

For his service and meritorious action in the forest of the Ardennes, Douglas Colby Elms received the Veteran's of the Battle of the Bulge Certificate, the Diplôme from the French Minister of Defense, the Bronze Star, the Belgian Fourragère, and most recently, the French Legion of Honor which was presented on June 7, 2012 at a ceremony held at the McGavick Event Center (Lakewood, WA) attended by numerous State and Local Officials including Washington State Senator, Mike Carrell and the Honorary French Consul, Mr. Jack Cowan. After pinning the medal on Mr. Elms' lapel and the traditional kiss on both cheeks, Mr. Elms thanked Consul Cowan by saying "Merci Beaucoup" to which the Consul replied, "Ah, you remember!" A Proclamation from Washington State Governor, Christine Gregoire, was also presented during the ceremony, declaring June 7th as "Douglas Elms Day."

In addition, on March 6, 2012, Mr. Elms received a Washington State Senate Resolution in his honor (SR 8705) from Senators Mike Carrell and Kohl-Welles.



Bob Hilderbrand, Douglas Elms, Jeff Wyrwitzke.



Doug Elms surrounded by family at FLH Ceremony.

After the war ended, Mr. Elms and his unit were sent to Karlsruhe, Germany to help liberate the Nazi forced labor camp and help relocate civilians who worked there. Little did he know that his future bride, Magdalena, would be one of these workers. They soon fell in love and after returning to Washington State, he sent for her and they were married shortly after her arrival. According to Mr. Elms, his greatest joys in life were meeting "Maggie" and helping to raise their family of four children.

Mr. Elms became a professional firefighter and made the rank of Assistant Chief. After retiring in 1963 from the SeaTac Fire Department, he followed his love of the sea and began working for various Maritime Services eventually retiring from NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) in 1983. At ages 91 and 88, respectively, Douglas and Maggie still reside, unaided, in their home in Tacoma, WA.



... the arrival of the book
YOU CAN'T PUT DOWN!!!

This book was written about the experiences Jack Roberts had while in combat when serving with the 106th Infantry Division during WWII which highlights being ambushed and captured by the Germans on the first day of the Battle of the Bulge in December, 1944.



John M. "Jack" Roberts



He goes into a detailed account of his harrowing escape while being marched behind enemy lines as a Prisoner of War. Early chapters let you learn about Jack's youth including military training leading up to his capture and finishes with his adjustment to civilian life with its rewards.

BOOK MAILING INFORMATION

QUESTIONS? Contact Jack at jmr819@aol.com or telephone (248) 338-2667

Price of book ("ESCAPE...!!!") is \$24.95 (plus \$4 for shipping and handling) — \$27.95

Number of books _____ @ \$27.95 = _____

AMOUNT ENCLOSED —

Make check payable to **John M. Roberts** and return the bottom of this form to him with your check to:

John M. Roberts
1059 Altar Road
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48304

(Please print)

Your Name: _____

Your Address: _____

Your City: _____ Your State: _____ Your ZIP: _____

Bleialf Is Overrun

Submitted by Steven B. Wheeler of Portland, Oregon
Mr. Wheeler is the son of a World War II veteran, and a Cold War veteran himself of the U.S. 1st Armored Division

Bleialf is a German town just over the Belgian frontier. The Germans call the area northeast of Bleialf the Schnee Eifel; the *Snow Mountains*. The forested heights seem to be a continuation of the area west of Bleialf that the Belgians call the Ardennes. In mid-December, 1944, the men of the US 106th Infantry Division called the area the front line.

With Christmas just days away, and the German army pushed back behind their 'West Wall,' the Americans stationed in Bleialf manned roadblocks, kept watch on the enemy, and waited for their mail to catch up. When they had taken over the defenses earlier that week from a veteran division (U.S. 2nd Infantry), the men of the 106th were told that the U.S. VIII Corps planned to use Bleialf as a jumping-off point for the lunge into Germany. While the humble farming town did not look like much, it afforded the men dry houses in which they could celebrate Christmas and New Year's.

The German high command also regarded Bleialf as an access point. Their plans called for restoring the crossroads to the Reich in the opening phase of a surprise offensive code-named Wacht Am Rhein. In the frigid pre-dawn hours of Saturday, December 16th, an entire regiment of the German 18th Volksgrenadier Division advanced on the town as silently as possible. Following a heavy barrage, they would attack.

The Terrain

Many of the town's homes and shops face the hard-surfaced road that climbs west out of the Alf valley, and turns northwest up and over a bald ridge. Beyond the crest, past a junction the GIs dubbed "88 Corner," the paved route turns more northerly. Eight miles further, it reaches Schoenberg. There, it intersects another paved road that loops around the northern end of the Schnee Eifel. Once the Germans controlled the Bleialf-Schoenberg road, and the intersection at Schoenberg, they would trap the two US regiments holding the Schnee Eifel. Those were the instructions Field Marshal Hasso-Eccard von Manteuffel gave to General of Artillery Walter Lucht, commanding the Fifth Panzer Army. Lucht assigned the mission to Colonel Gunther Hoffmann-Schoenborn and his 18th Volksgrenadier Division.

The Opposing Forces

The 18th Volksgrenadier had been manning the West Wall fortifications in the area since October. The Volksgrenadiers had had time to become familiar with the sector, but many were recent replacements. The division cadre came from the 18th Luftwaffe Field Division that had been ground up in battle near Mons in late summer. Replacements came from Luftwaffe and Kriegsmarine units, soldiers returned from hospital and convalescent leave, and recent drafts of civilians combed

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from factories and farms by tighter conscription laws. The division's six infantry battalions were reinforced by an assault gun battalion, plus mortar and rocket artillery units. Further artillery support was available from LXXVI Corps, and Fifth Panzer Army. The U.S. 106th Infantry Division, whose shoulder patch bore a lion's head, was a "green" outfit. Crossing the Atlantic in October, they had used what time they could of their seven weeks in England to train and integrate many new men. Despite the protests of the commander, Major General Allan W. Jones, over the summer the 106th had been raided for trained personnel to replace men fallen in the battle for France. Many 106th replacements came from the defunct Army Specialized Training Program, which had given qualified men the option of attending college after basic training. When that program was abruptly cancelled, the men went from carrying books to carrying rifles. Other replacements came from coastal artillery, anti-aircraft, Service, and Army Air Forces units. Many volunteered to transfer, some were sent. These were the men who had to learn how to strip a .30 machine gun, throw a grenade, fire a BAR, or bazooka in the hectic weeks in England. Then, they were herded ahead transports and shipped to the bombed-out port of Le Havre, France. They landed on December 6th and after waiting in the rain all night, were loaded onto open trucks for the three-day drive to the German border. With barely a break to get dry, they moved into the line December 11-12.

Men of the veteran 2nd Infantry Division, whom they replaced, had been

amazed to see some of the "Golden Lions" arrive still wearing neckties. The veterans cautioned the rookies to be extra quiet as they traded places. Changing units in the face of a watchful enemy is a risky business, and the hand-off from unit to unit was necessarily brief. The rookies inherited the 2nd Division's dispositions and defensive plans, like them or not. General Jones found there was nothing to be done about the fact that the newest division in the entire theatre had to cover a sector better than three times as long as the book said they should. With all three regiments in the line, the 106th was spread along a 22-mile sector.

Their predicament was due to a calculated gamble on the part of Supreme Headquarters Allied Forces Europe (SHAPE). The Brass regarded the Bleialf area, and the entire Ardennes, as a comparatively safe part of the front. The rugged hills and few east-west roads made it an unlikely area for large-scale movements by either side. It seemed a good spot for a rookie outfit to cut their teeth with some combat patrolling before taking part in the conquest of Germany.

Two of the 106th's regiments were actually manning the furthest penetration into Nazi Germany. In the fall, the Americans had carved out a salient in the West Wall by capturing the Schnee Eifel heights. But holding the ridge meant that the regiment on the northern half, the 422nd, had to bend back west to meet armored cavalry outfits in the Losheim Gap. On the southern half, the 423rd had to refuse its line to the west to include Bleialf. Up on the heights, the GIs actually used West Wall



pillboxes and bunkers as company and platoon command posts. The heavily forested slope facing the enemy could only be scaled on foot. But the flanks were vulnerable, especially in the south. A three mile gap yawned between the Schnee Eifel and the northern-most positions of the 424th Regiment. In that gap stood Bleialf.

To hold the town and fill the gap between regiments, like their predecessors, the 106th had to employ a mix of support units. The 423rd Antitank Company and part of Cannon Company, acting as infantry, occupied most of the town and positions on the lower slopes immediately north and northeast. There they tied in with 1st Battalion of the 423rd. A platoon from King Company, 3rd Battalion, 423rd and Charlie Company of the 820th Tank Destroyer (towed) Battalion occupied the rest of the town, except the train station. The station and the area around it was held by Troop B, 18th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron. The cavalrymen occupied buildings and dugouts

backed by their armored cars. To their left, they could see Bleialf a mile up the road. Their neighbors to the right rear, GIs from the 424th regiment, were out of view half a mile away through heavy forest. Patrols made contact with those neighbors who reported that they were also spread thin.

The Bleialf garrison was designated a provisional battalion and placed under Captain Charles B. Reid of the 423rd Anti-Tank Company. Reid sent repeated requests to regimental supply for more mines, barbed wire, and ammunition of all types to strengthen the defenses. But the prevailing attitude that the Germans were licking their wounds behind their pillboxes did not lend urgency to fulfilling his requests. More ammunition, he was told, would become available by December 16th.

Initial Assault

The German attack on Bleialf would open with a forty-five minute barrage by artillery and rockets commencing

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at 05:30. As soon as the barrage lifted, both battalions of the 293rd Volksgrenadier Regiment would advance to seize the town. Knowledge of the American dispositions gained over weeks of observation bolstered Colonel Hoffmann-Schoenborn's confidence that the shelling would severely weaken the defenders. Wearing white camouflage, his grenadiers would advance aided by searchlights directed at low cloud cover to provide "artificial moonlight." The predawn assault and the winter weather would keep the dreaded American fighter-bombers away, and with any luck, Bleialf would be restored to the Reich by mid-day. Meanwhile, his other two regiments would storm the Losheim Gap to encircle the Americans on the Schneef Eifel. By nightfall, his regiments should reunite at Schoenberg, with their vital first mission accomplished.

When the morning of Saturday, December 16th arrived, at precisely 05:30, mortars, artillery, and nebelwerfer rockets smashed into the Bleialf defenses. The roadblocks on the eastern and southern roads got especially heavy pasting. Buildings crumpled and caught

fire, roads and streets were cratered, and men were killed and wounded in the heavy barrage. For many, their first shelling was their last.

A crippling effect of the barrage was immediately apparent. Trying to assess the extent of the damage being inflicted, Captain Reid found nearly all telephone lines were cut among his defending units. Worse by far, he could not contact Regiment, or their supporting artillery. His radio operators reported primary and alternate frequencies jammed by German martial music, or heavy static. Any communication with Regiment or Division would have to be by courier over roads subject to exploding ordnance. Since the entire sector was getting pummeled, Reid had to assume that they would soon be fighting assault troops. He promptly assigned highest priority to repair of phone lines to the 590th Field Artillery. Other teams ventured into the shelling to restore lines to the 820th Anti-tank gun positions above town. His command was liable to need support in a hurry.

Shortly after 06:15, the enemy struck from three directions. Ghostly



The CUB of the **Golden Lion**

in their white overalls, German infantry swarmed out of the railroad tunnel near the train station and across snow fields to attack outposts along the Bleialf road. At the same time, hundreds more rushed from the wooded slopes of the Alferberg heights just east of Bleialf. They swamped the forward outposts as a third group charged from the Selerich road. Those struck the foxholes of Baker Company of the 423rd northeast of town.

Near the train tunnel, Troop B's 3rd platoon was hit first, but the attack soon engaged the entire outfit in a desperate fight. Every trooper's rifle, carbine, grease gun, every armored car machine gun and cannon was loosed upon the Germans. Grenades flew in both directions. Captain Robert G. Fossland, troop commander, sent the HQ cars into the fight to bolster spots in the most danger. And while they were not overrun, the enemy seized the outposts on the Bleialf road and pushed the battered third platoon back into the rail yard and station. Troop B was cut off from Bleialf.

In the town itself, Volksgrenadiers ran over and around the weakened outpost line. Reid's anti-tankers opened up on them from among the houses with everything they had. Flares shot into the sky to illuminate the enemy, weapons flashed in the gloom, grenades exploded in yards and alley ways. Potato mashers sailed through windows to blow flame and debris outward. Men died fighting in streets, parlors, and bedrooms. Some were blown up, some shot, some stabbed, or clubbed. It was close-quarters savagery. Hard as the GIs fought, the attackers' weight of numbers forced them from one building to the next. The

Germans pressed into town going uphill but always attacking. Leaving their dead behind, GI carrying parties took the wounded to the aid station where doctors and medics labored to stabilize the casualties so that they could be evacuated.

Meanwhile, Captain Reid sent HQ clerks, supply personnel, MPs—every available man into the fight to hold on as his wire teams worked feverishly. The strain of waiting was only relieved around 08:30 when a line to Regiment was finally reestablished. Speaking with Colonel Charles C. Cavender, commander of the 423rd, Reid said he needed help now. They were being driven into the upper end of town and he had no reserves. From the latest HQ position, the fighting was just down the block.

Dawn itself did bring some aid. Daylight made it easier to sight targets and forced the enemy to move more deliberately. Better yet, the GIs of Able and Baker Companies of the 423rd in their ridge-top holes had a grandstand view of the battle. They could see Germans pushing up the Selerich and Brandscheid roads and as phone lines were repaired, they called in artillery. The 590th FA Battalion fired mission after mission blasting Germans trying to get into Bleialf. But it was the Anti-tankers, Cannon Company men, third platoon of King Company, HQ, and supply clerks who fought for every inch of ground.

Colonel Cavender got off the phone with Reid and told the regimental Service Company commander to get his truck drivers, armorers, and mechanics down to Bleialf on the double. But by 09:00, Troop B was calling with their

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The CUB of the **Golden Lion**

own urgent need for help. Speaking over an artillery network, Cavender contacted Division and requested that his 2nd Battalion be released to him. Division refused, insisting it be retained in Divisional reserve. Cavender then asked for Baker Company of the 81st Combat Engineers. This was granted and he was told that about seventy men of Dog Company were also available—he'd get everyone they could round up. More immediate help was found by sending the rest of Cannon Company, minus their howitzers. Leading his cannoneers into Bleialf, Captain James L. Manning was killed. Captain Reid took charge of the troops and directed them into the battle.

About thirty minutes later, the men of the 81st Combat Engineers detrucked in woods half a mile west of town. Captain Hynes sent Lieutenant Gordon's platoon into town to make contact with Reid and the defenders. As this was being arranged, Chief Warrant Officer John A. Carmichael arrived from battalion headquarters with a truckload of ammunition. Carmichael volunteered to go in with Gordon. Drawing heavy fire from a cluster of houses, Gordon sent two five-man patrols to work their way into town. The left-hand patrol, led by Carmichael, forced the enemy before them to take cover in houses. Telling the men, "to keep the Krauts pinned down," Carmichael dodged heavy fire to scramble back up slope to a gun pit of Charlie Company, 820th TD Battalion. In short order, the cannon slammed high explosive shells into the enemy strong point. Lieutenant Gordon's platoon then secured the area allowing the rest of the engineers to move in.

Counterattack

Thanks to the artillery strikes called in by the 423rd observers on the heights above town, the Germans could not reinforce their troops. They held the lower two thirds of Bleialf, but the arrival of the men from Service and Cannon Companies had stymied any further advance. The arrival of more than two hundred GI reinforcements, who also delivered ammunition, gave Captain Reid the strength to counterattack.

Reduced platoons, half-squads, and individuals from the provisional battalion, along with the Service and Cannon Co. men, formed up with the newly arrived engineers. Volunteers from the garrison, resupplied with ammunition and grenades, showed the reinforcements where the Germans were. Then they methodically set about evicting them. Aided by cannon fire from the heights and artillery support, the GIs turned the tables on the enemy. By mid-afternoon, they had taken seventy-five prisoners and reoccupied all but the houses down toward the train station.

Lt. Colonel Frederick W. Nagle, the 423rd Regimental executive officer, had arrived in Bleialf around noon to assume overall command. As the counterattack reclaimed the town, Regiment informed Nagle that Troop B had been authorized to withdraw from the train station and fall back on the 424th Regiment near Winterscheid. There was now a two-mile gap between his right flank and his neighbor to the southwest. Moreover, there could be no further reinforcements. Cavender told him that 2nd Battalion had been released from Divisional reserve to fight German units advancing on Schoenberg and the

division's artillery supports. Other than ammunition re-supply, the only hope of help was a combat command of the 9th Armored Division reported to be on its way. Details of when it might arrive were unavailable.

With orders to hold, Nagle realized his forces were in a tough spot. All they could do was reorganize, dig in, construct barricades, refill ammunition pouches, and eat what food was available. Prisoners and wounded were evacuated. American bodies were collected. Unless they were in the way, German bodies lay where they had fallen. NCOs arranged guard shifts to give the weary defenders a few hours to succumb to exhaustion.

Nagle was hardly alone in his assessment of the situation. As evening turned to night, everyone dreaded the next German attack. The continuously jammed radios, and the horizon lit by artillery could only mean one thing. Patrols were sent out to gain the defenders as much warning as possible.

Final Assault

While German shelling never completely ceased in the Bleialf area, it began picking up around 03:00 on the morning of Sunday, December 17th. The increasing tempo of explosions affirmed what Lt. Colonel Nagle had been hearing from patrols. To the east and south, his scouts had seen German armor moving up with companies of infantry. As the shelling intensified, and the telephone lines were knocked out again, Nagle sent runners to alert all units. He was especially concerned that commanders had briefed their subordinates on the contingency.

evacuation plan. With German armor about to attack, it looked likely they might soon put it into action.

The defenders withstood heavy shelling until 06:00, then the Germans rolled forward. As expected, they came from the south and east, and they closed in fast. Assault guns and infantry waded into the attenuated defenses. The GIs along the train station road were quickly isolated, captured, or killed. The Bleialf defenders sent up flares and engaged the enemy with rifles, machine guns, and what few surprises the engineers had. had time to construct. Bazooka teams tried to knock out assault guns, but swarming grenadiers made it deadly for anyone to expose himself to take a shot. Surviving 57-mm antitank guns tried to stop the panzers and were repaid by fresh shelling. But the rapid demise of the outposts along the train station road enabled the enemy to strike from both front and flank. The Germans began rolling up the defenders, overwhelming successive positions using the weight of both battalions of the 293rd Volksgrenadier, and their panzer and artillery support. The irresistible pressure forced Nagle to order his units to pivot back toward the 423rd's positions north and west of town. They withdrew using the end of the Schnee Eifel ridge as their anchor. Small teams and individuals fought as rear guards to give their buddies time to get clear. Some died; others were captured, some rejoined their outfits, or got away barely evading the enemy.

The weight of the concentric attack can be judged by the fact that the

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volksgrenadiers cleared Bleialf in little more than an hour. Well before the winter dawn, they were advancing over the ridge bound for Schoenberg. Speeding ahead of them went trucks and jeeps bearing wounded sent to the rear before the town was lost. Shouting to supply trucks trying to move south, and to supporting artillery units, the fleeing GIs spread the word. The Germans had broken through.

Consequences

Most of the defenders linked up with the 423rd Regiment to extend its line westward from the Schnee Eifel. Scattered handfuls managed to evade capture and either link up with the 424th, as did Troop B, 18th Cavalry, or march cross-country to St. Vith itself. But with Bleialf overrun, the southern route around the Schnee Eifel was wide open. Unfortunately for two thirds of the 106th Division, so was the northern route. The 14th Cavalry Group had been overwhelmed, driven back, or pushed aside in the Losheim Gap so that the converging regiments of the 18th Volksgrenadier met at Schoenberg sometime around 9AM on the second morning of the offensive.

Over the next few days, the men from Bleialf fought with the encircled 423rd and 422nd Regiments until, out of ammunition, out of food, burdened with increasing numbers of casualties, out of contact with Division, or any higher headquarters, they faced the choice of an overwhelming barrage and final assault, or surrender. No accurate figure

exists, but an estimated 7,000-8,000 Americans went into captivity the morning of December 21st, 1944.

There is no question that the 'green' GIs who defended Bleialf fought doggedly, with grim determination against their almost as green enemy. But the odds were against the Americans. At Bleialf, two full Volksgrenadier battalions reinforced with assault guns overcame the mixed force of anti-tankers, cannoners, service personnel, engineers, and cavalrymen that were all that the 106th Division could muster. The SHAPE assessment that the Ardennes would remain a backwater, and the secret, sudden commitment of Germany's last reserves in a desperate winter offensive combined to doom the GIs in Bleialf. Victims of Allied overconfidence and failures of intelligence to predict the German onslaught, the American defenders fought with courage. Their sacrifice delayed the German offensive by a few hours, but those hours provided time for reserves to reach St. Vith. The remnants of the 106th Division and the 81st Combat Engineers were bolstered by an armored combat command, but it came from the 7th Armored Division that motored south and east as the Bleialf defenders hung on. In turn, St. Vith was held long enough to severely disrupt the German timetable and enable large scale shifting of allied forces to the Ardennes. The brave stand at Bleialf ultimately helped defeat the final German offensive on the western front.

Veterans and Family of the 106th Infantry Division TATTOO* Requests

With space in *The CUB* at a premium, yet *Reunited Buddies and Their Families* an important commodity, the editor of *The CUB of the Golden Lion* created the following list [*In Their Own Words, most often*] of inquiries submitted to him in hopes of helping people get in touch with the 106th I.D. Association Family. The following are requests for information. Feel free to contact them if you believe you can be of assistance. *The CUB* staff has received permission from all listed below to print their inquiry and their contact email (phone and address when available).

In addition, Non-Veteran member Connie Pran Baseman, daughter of Lt. Gerald Pratt (Field Artillery), has been one of three people helping to manage the 106th's online "message board" (set up by Jim West) for people to write an inquiry, looking for comrades, or for people who might have known a relative who is now gone. Sadly, some inquiries sit unanswered when the answers may be out there with a reader of *The CUB* who doesn't use a computer. The list has gotten quite long and Connie has asked that whenever there is room in *The CUB* we add a few of the requests. You can find messages like these below, along with other searches on the 106th Message Board at the following Web address: <http://106thdivision.proboards.com/index.cgi>

*The original meaning of **military tattoo** was a military drum performance, but subsequently it came to mean army displays, or a form of gathering more generally. For our Association, letting members know that someone would like to speak with them is "why we do this! So keep sending in your stories, as an old friend may find you!" — Susan Weiss (Publisher of *The CUB*) and William McWhorter (Editor of *The CUB*)

Harry Hicks (590/A) — New Association member Stacy Hicks is searching for information about her grandfather, Harry Hicks, 590/A. She says she will be going to the Bulge area in April to view the battle sites, and wonders if anyone has any knowledge of her grandfather's service. You can reach Ms. Stacy Hicks at 4334 Sneed Rd., Nashville, TN 37215. (615) 383-3996. Stacy@hifibuyasnashville.com.

Leif Mikkelsen (423/I) — Greg Mikkelsen's father Leif Mikkelsen served during the Battle of the Bulge as a First Sergeant in I Company, 3rd Bn. 423 Infantry Regiment. He is requesting assistance in determining what campaign ribbons and/or unit citations his father's unit would be eligible for. Anyone with information to share may contact Mr. Greg Mikkelsen at glmikkelsen46@gmail.com.

Vincent J. Byrnes, (423/Service Company) — Karen Byrnes Fuoco is looking for information about her dad, Golden Lion Vincent J. Byrnes. She has shared the following in hopes it might be able remind someone of her father and help her find out more about the final chapter of her dad's World War II story. Ms. Fuoco has been very fortunate to receive, and speak with many former POWs regarding their time in the Ardennes and later in POW Camps. Some of whom were believed to be with or in close proximity to her dad during the battle, his capture, and later imprisonment at Stalag IIIa. Nevertheless, she is left with a gap in the timeline of her father's liberation on April 15, 1945, and how exactly he was liberated.

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Ms. Fuoco has spoken with at least 15 men who were with the 422nd Infantry Regiment and the Service Co. In one story, a former POW witnessed her dad's truck being blown up and catching on fire, after his comrade in the seat beside him was shot and killed. Mr. Byrnes managed to escape the inferno. From here his whereabouts is assumed from stories told to Ms. Fuoco. He was able to find his way and join up with the men of the 423rd and 422nd that were left to fight. Ms. Fuoco believes their location at their time of capture was Schaeffer Eiffel. On Dec. 19, 1944 sometime around 2:00 PM these men were surrendered per order of Col. Cavender. Ms. Fuoco has obtained information as to her father's journey from this point forward until his final destination of Stalag IIIA. Vincent Byrnes was assigned to work on the railroad along the route to Magdeburg on the Elbe River. Ms. Fuoco believes since it was an immensely long trek from Stalag IIIA to this area perhaps her dad was held in one of the work camps outside of Magdeburg. Ms. Fuoco can only ascertain from Mr. Byrnes's DD214, that on April 15 he was repatriated or liberated, some 19 days before the Russian forces liberated Stalag IIIA. How he managed this is a mystery to Ms. Fuoco. Some reports given to her husband tell of unidentified American forces on the opposite side of the Elbe River that managed to cross before the order was given to pull back. These men may have been instrumental in the rescue of Mr. Byrnes and those nearby working on that end of the railroad. Or perhaps, did these American POWs just walk away from the POW camp knowing the Russians were on a rapid advance? What happened to him, how did he become liberated, and by whom if anyone? Where did he go from there, and with whom? Did he just walk away, or was he rescued by the American forces who managed to cross the Elbe River?

From this point, Ms. Fuoco can only guess where her father was taken. One can only assume he was sent to Camp Lucky Strike in France. His DD214 states he departed LeHavre, France on April 29th, 1945 and arrived in the U.S. on May 12th, 1945. He was not immediately sent home to his family. However Ms. Fuoco does not know where he was sent until he was given R & R in New Hampshire perhaps in June 1945.

If anyone who reads this article was in this area around this time, please consider reaching out to Karen Byrnes Fuoco at KMBFuoco25@aol.com, 120 Twinbrook Lane, Bellingham, MA 02019, or by phone at 508-657-1132.

An update to a Previous Tattoo Request – In the last issue of *The CUB*, Vol. 68, No. 1, George E. Fusco, the brother of **Alfonso S. Fusco (T/Sgt)** in Company L of the 423rd Infantry Regiment, requested information on his brother from anyone who might have known him. According to George, Alfonso was captured in the Battle of the Bulge. Alfonso never talked about his experiences and died of cancer in 1960. George knows that his co-Sgts in Co L were Sgts. Grasso and F. Montiverdi. In this update, George has submitted this photo of his brother, Alfonso, taken during the Tennessee Maneuvers. If anyone knew Alfonso, please email George at Godfatherfus@gmail.com or call at 301-829-9999.



Make Your Plans NOW!

The 2012 66th Annual Reunion of the 106th Infantry Division Association is Just Around the Corner

The Doubletree Hotel in Arlington, VA, will host the 66th Annual Golden Lion Association Reunion on September 5-9, 2012.

The Association has held a reunion there before, but there is always something new to visit in the D.C. area.

If you have not already made arrangements, please consider joining us at the 2012 Reunion. You should have received a letter in the mail with reunion registration information included. If you did not, please go to

www.afr-reg.com/106inf2012 to get a copy of reunion registration materials and you may also register there online and pay by credit card.

66th Annual Reunion of the 106th Infantry Division Association Agenda

Wednesday, September 5

2:00 – 6:00 pm	Reunion Registration open	12:00 – 2:30 pm	Men's Luncheon and Business Meeting
2:00 pm	Outgoing Board of Directors' Meeting	12:00 – 2:00 pm	Ladies' Luncheon and Entertainment
	Hospitality Room and Memorabilia Display open for the duration of the reunion	3:00 – 3:30 pm	Banquet table reservation sheets will be collected. Instructions in your registration packet.
			Dinner on your own before the four bonding
		8:00 – 10:30 pm	"WASHINGTON AFTER DARK" TOUR

Thursday, September 6

7:30 – 8:30 am	Full Breakfast Buffet (compliments of the Association)
8:30 – 9:00 am	Reunion Registration open
9:30 am – 3:00 pm	CITY TOUR / WW II MEMORIAL
3:30 – 5:00 pm	Reunion Registration open
6:00 pm	Cash Bar Reception
7:00 – 9:00 pm	Welcome Dinner

Friday, September 7

7:30 – 8:30 am	Full Breakfast Buffet
9:00 – 10:00 am	Reunion Registration open. Additional hours will be posted at the reunion if necessary.

Saturday, September 8

7:30 – 8:30 am	Full Breakfast Buffet
8:30 – 9:30 am	Memorial Service
10:00 am – 3:00 pm	STEVEN F. UDVAR-HAZY CENTER
3:30 – 4:30 pm	Incoming Board of Directors' Meeting
6:00 pm	Cash Bar Reception
7:00 pm	Banquet begins

Sunday, September 9

7:00 – 8:30 am	Farewell Breakfast Buffet
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106th Infantry Division Assoc. Reunion Tour Descriptions

City Tour / WW II Memorial

Thursday, September 6

See the sites of our nation's capital during a driving tour of Washington, D.C. Ride by the Lincoln Memorial, Jefferson Memorial, WW II Memorial, the Mall, Capitol Building, Washington Monument, White House, and other notable monuments and federal buildings. Free time will be allowed at a memorial of the National World War II Memorial, the first national memorial dedicated to all who served during World War II. Afterward, stop at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center, which is the largest building (3.1 million square feet) in Washington, DC and is the first and only federal building dedicated to both government and private use. While there, enjoy lunch on your own at the Reagan Building food court — named one of the "best family food courts" in DC.

Note: A photo ID is required for entrance to the Ronald Reagan Building.

9:30am, board bus, 3:00pm back at the hotel

\$46/Person includes bus and guide. Lunch on own.

"Washington After Dark" Tour

Friday, September 7

Following dinner on your own at the hotel, enjoy the sights of Washington from a new perspective. Planned in 1790 by Pierre Charles L'Enfant, Washington is a city of broad avenues, circles, squares, and landscaped gardens. See Capitol Hill, and then drive along the Mall where many of the museums of the Smithsonian Institute are located. See the beautifully lit Washington Monument with its circle of flags waving in the breeze. Across the Tidal Basin, see the Jefferson Memorial, a tribute to the author of the Declaration of Independence and one of our founding fathers. See and hear about many more buildings, as our guide introduces you to the history and architecture of Washington, DC. Both the city's buildings and monuments are beautiful when lit up at night. Especially impressive and dear to our heart is the WW II Memorial. It is worth seeing a second time — a "must see" at night!

8:00 pm board bus, 10:30 pm back at hotel

\$33/Person includes bus and guide.

Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center

Saturday, September 8

This museum, part of the Smithsonian Institution's National Air and Space Museum, is dedicated to the preservation and display of its collection of historic aviation and space artifacts. Located at Washington International Dulles Airport, the facility has large aviation and space exhibit hangars. The museum currently has over eighty aircraft and dozens of space artifacts on display including the Space Shuttle Discovery, an SR-71 Blackbird, the Dash 80 prototype of the Boeing 707, and the B-29 Superfortress "Enola Gay." Lunch options include a food-court style McDonald's and coffee place. You may tour the exhibits at your own pace, but there is a lot of walking, so please wear comfortable shoes.

10:00 am board bus, 3:00 pm back at the hotel

\$41/Person includes bus and escort. Lunch on own.

Driver and guide gratuities are not included in the tour prices.

Please be at the bus boarding area at least five minutes prior to the scheduled time.

All trips require a minimum of thirty people, unless otherwise stated.

2012 Annual Reunion Banquet Keynote Speaker

Submitted by Murray Stein (4233)

Major General James K. Gilman, U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command hails from Hymers, Indiana. He is a 1974 graduate of Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology with a degree in Biological Engineering and received his MD degree from Indiana University School of Medicine in 1978.

Following a categorical medicine internship and residency in internal medicine at Brooke Army Medical Center (BAMC), Major General Gilman served as the Chief Resident in Medicine at BAMC and then as staff internist and Chief, Internal Medicine Service, U.S. Army Medical Department Activity, Nürnberg, Germany. He then returned to BAMC where he completed a fellowship in cardiovascular diseases and serve as a staff cardiologist. In 1991, Major General Gilman completed a fellowship in clinical cardiac electrophysiology at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, Texas. He then served as Chief of Cardiac Electrophysiology and Assistant Chief of the Cardiology Service, Brooke Army Medical Center. From 1994 until 1997, he served as Chief of Cardiology and Cardiology Fellowship Program Director at BAMC. In 1995, he deployed to Haiti with the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment in support of Operation Uphold Democracy.

Subsequent assignments include: Deputy Commander for Clinical Services, Darnall Army Community Hospital, Fort Hood, Texas; Deputy Commander for Clinical Services, Madigan Army Medical Center; Commander, Bassett Army Commu-

nity Hospital, Fort Wainwright, Alaska; Acting Assistant Surgeon General for Force Projection; Office of the Surgeon General (OTSG); Director, Health Policy and Services, OTSG; and Commander, Walter Reed Health Care System. Before coming to the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command, Major General Gilman served as Commander, Brooke Army Medical Center and Great Plains Regional Medical Command in San Antonio, Texas.

Major General Gilman is a graduate of Command and General Staff College and the Army War College. He is board certified in both Internal Medicine and Cardiovascular Diseases. He is a fellow of the American College of Cardiology. Military awards and decorations include the Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit (3 OLC), Meritorious Service Medal (2 OLC), the Army Staff Badge, and the Expert Field Medical Badge. He also is the recipient of The Surgeon General's "A.C." Proficiency Designator and a member of the Order of Military Medical Merit.

Major General Gilman is married to the former Jeffri Lynn Sweet of Shelburn, Indiana, and they have three daughters — Emily, Katy, and Sarah (Mrs. Kevin Bryant).



Major General James K. Gilman, the 66th Annual 106th Infantry Division Association Reunion Keynote Speaker

**PLEASE REPORT ALL CHANGES OF ADDRESS AND DEATHS TO:
ASSOCIATION TREASURER AND MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN:**

Harry F. Martin Jr. (424/L)
121 McGregor Ave., Mt. Arlington, NJ 07856
Phone: 973-663-2410
Email: hmartin19@optonline.net

ARVOLD, NORMAN WOODROW 422/B

—Date of Death: May 10, 2012

Norman Woodrow Arvold, age 96, passed away peacefully on Thursday, May 10, 2012, surrounded by family and friends. He was born on February 3, 1916 in Madison to Theodore and Hilda Arvold. In 1935, Norman graduated from Madison East High School and proceeded to serve his country, state and community. Norman was a member of the Civilian Conservation Corps. He proudly served as a master sergeant in the U.S. Army 106th Division during the Battle of the Bulge. In 1978, he retired as chief operating engineer for the State of Wisconsin. He was also a volunteer firefighter with Blooming Grove Fire Department and a member of the VFW, Loyal Order of Moose 1451, and 106th Infantry Division Association Golden Lions. Storm n Norman was an avid arm chair couch for the Green Bay Packers, and a passionate outdoorsman who loved nature's gifts. Norman excelled in carpentry, golfing, dancing and finding the best Friday night fish fries and enjoyed spending time at his home in Lake Tomahawk with his family and friends.

Submitted by his son, Jeff Arvold, as well as Marshall P. Streib, 589/B

CHRISTIANSON, REV. EDWARD L. 331st MED BN/C

—Date of Death: March 2, 2012



Rev. Mr. Edward L. Christianson, "Deacon Ed," age 88, of Winchester, Va., passed away Friday, March 2, 2012, at Winchester Medical Center.

He was born in 1924 in Green Bay, WI, a son of the late Ben and Stella Christianson. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by a brother and a sister. Surviving are his wife Mary, of 66 years; three children, Sharon Sucher of Springfield, VA; Susan Bessette of King George, VA, and David Christianson of Fort Worth, TX, and two brothers, Kenneth Christianson of Wausau, WI and James Christianson of Green Bay, WI. He has 7 grandsons and 7 great grand children.

Rev. Christianson was a World War II veteran. He served with the 106th Infantry Division as a Combat Medic during the Battle of the Bulge. Among his military awards were the Combat Medic Badge, the Purple Heart, the Bronze Star for Valor and three bronze campaign stars. After his discharge, he and his wife returned to Washington, DC to his former position with the National Bureau of Standards.

He was an Optical Instrument Technician. He completed his college studies in 1951 and graduated from St. Norbert's College, Green Bay, WI with a B.S. degree in Physics.

He transferred to the U.S. Navy, Bureau of Aeronautics as an aero-space engineer. He served for ten years on the R & D teams responsible for the design and development of several of the Navy's air defense jet aircraft and missile systems. Following this assignment, he transferred to NASA Manned Space Flight to do feasibility studies of a manned mission to Mars to follow the Apollo Lunar Program. These studies were terminated when it was determined the mission to be too costly and ambitious in that time period. He was the Medical Experiments Manager for both the Gemini and Skylab programs for which he received the Distinguished Service Award.

Deacon Ed was a pioneer in the "choose-and-cut" Christmas tree business in Virginia. After his retirement from NASA in 1975, he and Mary moved to Frederick County where they both became active in the Sacred Heart Catholic Church. He was a past Grand Knight of the Knights of Columbus, and past president of the local NARFE Chapter.

At the invitation of his pastor, Ed began a three year course of studies to prepare him for service within the Arlington Diocese. He was ordained by Bishop Thomas J. Welch on May 16, 1981 to the Order of Deacon and was assigned to the Sacred Heart Catholic Church and the Franciscan Friary at White Post to serve the needs of the priests and the people of the area.

The family will receive friends at Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church on Monday, March 5, 2012, from 1:00 until 5:00 p.m. A funeral mass will be celebrated at 11:00 a.m. Tuesday, March 6, at Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church. Burial will be at Sacred Heart Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Tution Angel at Sacred Heart Catholic Church, 130 Keating Drive, Winchester, VA 22601.

Arrangements are being handled by Omphs Funeral Home, Amherst Chapel. Please view obituaries and tribute wall at www.omphsfuneralhome.com.

Reported by Jackie and Harry Martin

DAVIS, RINARD G. 424/C

—Date of Death: July 1, 2011

Submitted by Donna Davis, Kansas City, MO

DESANTIS, JOE 422/HQ

—Date of Death: February 15, 2012

Reported by his daughter, Joanne

FLETCHER, BEN P. 81ST ENG/C

—Date of Death: March 24, 2012

My husband, Ben P. Fletcher of Lynchburg, TN died March 24, 2012. He was in the 106th Infantry Division for almost 3 years. He was taken a prisoner of the Germans on December 17, 1944 during the Battle of the Bulge and held until May of 1945. He is survived by his wife of 64 years, two sons, one daughter, 5 grandchildren and 5 great grandchildren. All were his pride and joy. He served his country with pride.

Submitted by his wife, Mary Jo Fletcher

GILDER, A. ROBERT**424/HQ 1ST BN***—Date of Death: February 21, 2012*

Robert Gilder was born in 1926. He was a past president of the 106th Infantry Division Association, a board member for several years, and a regular attendee at reunions. His spouse of 65 years, Jean Gilder co-hosted with Mr. Gilder a mini-reunion on December 15. Golden Lion Frank Trautman (424/A) says of Mr. Gilder, "at my first 106th reunion, held in Grand Rapids, Michigan in 1972 one of the first people to introduce himself to me, to welcome me, was Robert." Mr. Gilder's funeral was held at the Ohio Western Reserve National Cemetery.

Reported by Murray Stein (423/I) in the last issue of The CUB, Vol. 68, No. 1.

This update was submitted by Mr. Frank Trautman (424/A)

KOEHLER, ARNOLD**424/D***—Date of Death: April 2012*

Golden Lion Arnold Koehler was captured during the "Bulge" and was a prisoner of war in Stalag IV-B. He passed away on the same day of the month that he was liberated on.

Submitted by his son, Michael Koehler

MCGINTY, EDWARD F., JR.**589/C***—Date of Death: July 1, 2012*

Golden Lion Ed McGinty was an Ex-POW, wounded while a prisoner by a .50 cal bullet fired from a fighter plane that penetrated the roof of the building he was in and striking him in the leg. After discharge he became a lawyer and later was appointed to the bench as an Administrative Judge in Baltimore City, MD. Mr. McGinty was the beloved husband of Elizabeth Anne McGinty, devoted father of Erin Anne Alban and Michael J. McGinty; cherished grandfather of Elizabeth Parker, Robert Alban, Johnathan Alban, Matthew and Paige McGinty; great-grandfather of Gabrielle and Edward Parker. A Mass of Christian Burial was held at St. Mark's Catholic Church and interment followed at Good Shepherd Cemetery.

Submitted by John Schaffner (589/A)

REIDER, GEORGE S., JR.**423/M***—Date of Death: Unknown*

Submitted by his daughter, Susan Reider

RITCHIE (RICHEY), NORMAN**422/E***—Date of Death: May 9, 2012*

Golden Lion Norman Ritchie passed away in Shelbyville, Indiana.

Reported by his wife to Sy Lichtenfeld

ROBINSON, PAULA**422***—Date of Death: November 6, 2011*

He was born February 8, 1922, in Waterloo, son of Harland and Marvel Mentzer Robinson. He married Phyllis Jean Jindrich on October 5, 1951. Mr. Robinson served in World War II with the U.S. Army's 106th Infantry Division in combat in the European Theater and in the occupation of Germany. In 1946, he began his career as a firefighter with the Waterloo Fire Department, retiring in 1975 as a Lieutenant. He also owned and operated Robby's Lawnmower Service from 1954 until his retirement in 1989. He was a member of Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church and Becker-Chapman Post 138 of the American Legion. He is survived by his devoted wife of 60 years, four daughters, four sons, sixteen grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren.

Submitted by his son,

Harland C. Robinson, USMC (Retired)

RUDDICK, DONALD K.**592/HQ***—Date of Death: January 7, 2010*

Reported by Jackie and Harry Martin

SWARTZ, HARVEY L.**423/H***—Date of Death: September 19, 2000*

*Submitted by his stepdaughter,
Patricia Auker Arbogast*

TWAROK, FRED**424/A***—Date of Death: unknown*

Golden Lion Jim Forsythe (424/A) said of Mr. Twarok, "It was an honor to know and associate with Fred during our young lives in the military, especially in Company A of the 424th Regiment. At the peak of our lives we placed ambitions and lifestyles aside and travelled overseas to do our part in defending our country against those that would destroy our way of life. Our combined contributions both great and small made a decisive difference in the outcome of World War II." Along the lines of Tom Brokaw's famous book, *The Greatest Generation*, Forsythe went on to say, "Fred Twarok is an example of those brave men of the Greatest Generation. I consider myself and any and all who knew or befriended Fred as better for the Honorable occasion."

Reported by Jim Forsythe (424/A)

WEIDENSAUL, JAMES L.**422/C***—Date of Death: October 19, 2011*

*Submitted by his daughter, Beth Weidensaul,
324 Ardmore Ave., Pitman, NJ 08073*

ZUCKERMAN, JACK**423/F***—Date of Death: February 21, 2012*

Jack was in Boynton Beach, FL at the time of his death. He leaves his wife, Estelle, son Marc, daughter Lois and two grandchildren.

Submitted by Sy Lichtenfeld

Editor's Special Memoriam Notification:



Barbara
"Bobbie"
Stein

In Memoriam
1928 - 2012



BARBARA STEIN

—Date of Death: April 7, 2012

Born in New York on February 7, 1928. Adored by her husband Murray Stein (423/1), she passed away earlier this year in Florida. Barbara was a volunteer in New York with the Cancer Care Organization and in Florida with the Listening to Children Group. Murray and Barbara met when she was 14 years old and were together for 70 years. Married for more than 65 years, she has been more than a loving wife. She was faithfully devoted to her sons Mark and Greg, especially treasured by her granddaughters Loren and Sabrina. God broke our hearts to prove that he only takes the best. She will live in our hearts forever.

Invictus

by Dale R. Carver 424

Shattered trunks and branches littered the forest floor.
The Pine Tree trembled, whispered "I will rise once more."

Standing by itself, riven, and black with smoke,
"Man plays with fire; I will rise," a promise from an Oak.

I heard their lesser sisters in the forest sigh
"We only know to always lift our branches to the sky."

In the shell-torn meadow, a murmur from the grass,
"I am Earth's great healer; all of this shall pass."

Excerpt from the book *Before the Veterans Die* by Dale R. Carver
Books may be purchased from Ruth Carver, rscarver@cox.net; 225-767-3111 or send \$10, which includes postage to: Ruth Carver, 742 Druid Circle, Baton Rouge, LA 70808.

We are all feeling the effects of the current financial upheaval, including the 106th I.D. Association. The *Annual Dues* of \$10 are no longer billed or collected. We are now accepting only donations for membership, memorials and Life Plus. The previously-allowed payment of \$75 for Life Membership creates a financial shortfall, as our expenses exceeds our income.

Our solution?

We are asking you to join the
LIFE PLUS+ Club

Those Members who contribute to the LIFE PLUS+ Club
will have their names (only, no amounts will be shown)
published in the next CUB.

You can donate as much or as little as you can, and as often as you like.
By donating, you are helping perpetuate the 106th Infantry Division Association.

To those Members who we haven't heard from for a long time —
please take the time to join this exclusive club. *Thank you!*

Send your contribution, check made payable to 106th Infantry Div. Association, to:

Harry F. Martin Jr.
Treasurer, 106th Infantry Division
121 McGregor Ave., Mount Arlington, NJ 07856