ROANOKE WELCOMES 106TH

Ten former members of Company D, 424th Regt were part of the happy group welcomed to Roanoke, VA for the Division Association’s 50th Reunion. They began to arrive on Thursday, Aug 29 for the reunion to be held Aug 30 through Sep 2nd. The group was large enough to occupy The Marriott and The Sheraton.

I believe this was the largest showing of former members for D/424 since it began. The past years have been held together by steady attendance from Bob Landis and Walter Bridges. Walter Bridges, The Judge, who is an Association Director, will be very active and has been, in helping to present number 51 in Nashville, TN next year. Start making your plans and lets make ten in attendance look small.

Returning the second year in a row was the “military couple” from upstate New York, Alden and Margaret Russell. Some of you remember Alden as Lt Russell, as well as our second CO at Ft Jackson. And Margaret was a Lt, Army Nurse (God bless them). They are a happy couple and always seemed to have a smile on their face.

Also representing the second platoon was Joe Goodwin and wife Gay. Joe and I spent some good enjoyable times together as part of an umpire team during the “D Series” with Lt Van Emelen. Joe and Gay are a story that another movie could be made about. Joe and his wife and Gay and her husband were very close friends some years ago. Then Gay lost her husband and his death left her with seven children. Providing much help that good friends can and will do, were Joe and his wife, with six children of their own. After a period of time, Joe lost his wife and Gay gave the support. I know those of you who weren’t in Roanoke to meet them, are already to the “conclusion” to this story. Yes, Joe and Gay decided to tie the knot and make it “a baker dozen.” Joe, the question that I didn’t ask, Where do you put all of them when it comes to Christmas?

For the first time and traveling all the way from the state of Washington, were Myron and Beatrice Dickerson. He joined the 106th at Cp Atterbury. He is part Indian and entered service from South Dakota like Moe and Goedert. Like all of us, he has put on a few pounds, but he always had a smile. Beatrice was very quiet, but very friendly. This guy and I, along with two others spent our last night in the U.S. together checking out Skully’s Square in Boston. I hope they can make Nashville.

SALUTE PLATOON LEADER

Lt. Allen G. Smith (10-17-22 to 7-9-86)
Born on a farm near Bethany, in the Illinois heartland. He graduated from high school at nearby Arthur, Illinois and entered the University of Illinois, September, 1940. Smith graduated with a B.S. in Agriculture in October, 1943. He was initiated intoPhi Kappa Phi, Alpha Zeta, and Gamma Sigma Delta as an undergraduate.

Following graduation from U. of Illinois, Smith was inducted into the army. After completing Basic Training he was assigned to Infantry Officers OCS, Ft. Benning, GA. Lt Smith upon graduation, May 1944, got a commission as a Second Lieutenant and a wife. He was then assigned to the Infantry Replacement Training Center, Cp Joseph T Robinson, AR. It was there on 26 October 1944 that he got the big news that he was headed to Europe. There were 45 Lieutenants on the orders, and of the number two of them would be assigned to Company D, 424th Infantry Regiment. Lt Smith arrived and was assigned on December 26 in the heat of battle as the platoon leader for the Third Platoon, Mortars. He held this

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EUROPEAN THEATER COMMAND, 1945
A semi-circle slowly pushed itself in front of the chaplain. The services began. There they were, men who had seen many days of combat. Some clean shaven, some with a couple days of beard. Some with raincoats, some without. All with their weapons slung over their shoulders. Rain was falling on all. We sang a song. The rain blotted the pages of the song book. Every man sang from the bottom of his heart. He was singing for God. He was singing for his loved ones back home. He was singing maybe for the last time. Everyone sang as if he was weighing the value of each word. Officers and men all together. You can’t tell one from the others. No bars, no stripes. All buddies together.

Then came the prayer. Each man reached for his steel helmet. There, bareheaded, these men prayed. The rain dropped slowly down on these bare heads. Overhead our artillery whizzed passed. On both sides shells are landing and guns are blurring out their death-dealing food, yet not a muscle quivered. These men knew when to hit the ground. They have hit it time and time before but the chaplain admonished, “Hit the ground if a shell comes our way.” He knew too. He has hit the ground along with the rest of us.

Then came a sermon. The sermon wasn’t long because each man had work to get done. Our thoughts were on home and the chaplain admonished us to remember the Lord. Then he told us to always do our best and when we get back to be good citizens.

AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

Those of you, former members of Company D, 424th Infantry Regiment or survivors, who have not applied to receive medals and awards for service rendered; if you would like to apply for them, contact me and I will mail you the forms and simplified instructions for applying. Once you apply, it will take three to six month... or so. They will also ask you if you would like the presentation as part of a ceremony or just receive them in the mail.

For survivors, the actual decorations are very beautiful and to receive them as part of a ceremony can be very eventful. I also believe that receiving these awards and decorations can be a very meaningful part of your children’s and even your grandchildren’s lives, knowing that they were part of their heritage.

It is not a time consuming procedure to complete the application but having the discharge papers and the attached separation form will help. If you have neither, apply anyway. If the discharge papers have been lost or destroyed, you may apply for a new set.

Phil Rosenthal and Bob Homan have applied for and received theirs. A picture that Bob Homan sent to me, a picture of him with the decorations framed and presented very handsomely. I noticed that they were on a wall beside a large poster about The Bulge that he received while on their trip to Belgium ‘95. If there are others who have applied for and have received them, I would like to hear about them. Drop me a line.

ATTEND A DECEMBER MINI-REUNION AND HAVE FUN
GERLACHS AND HOMANS
VISIT BELGIUM-1994

The Gerlachs and the Homans got together in Texas during the winter of 1993-94 and decided to go to Belgium for the 50th Anniversary of The Battle of The Bulge. We decided to go before June 1st to avoid the crowds. We booked through Sabina Airlines who made all of our reservations, including a car. We left home May 30th, 1994 and returned home June 9th, 1994. We did not know it, but we had been put in first class. That made it a real treat. We had planned to spend the first two nights and the last in Brussels. We landed in Brussels and spent a day sightseeing and then got our car the next morning and drove to St Vit where we had hotel reservations for two days. Driving in Belgium is quite an experience. We managed to get lost a lot, but all we had to do was stop and somebody was always there to help us on our way. We spent three days at the P& L Margriff Hotel and two days at another hotel. Hotels in Europe were all great. That evening we were walking down the street looking for a place to eat, when a woman stopped us and asked if we were from the 106th - as she had heard two Americans were in town and she wanted to meet them. We then introduced ourselves, and they (she and her husband) would wait for us at the hotel. That is when our friendship began with Adda and Willy Rivken, who live in Gouvy, Belgium and belong to CRIBA.

Upon our return, after dinner, we spent the rest of the evening talking about the war. They wanted to pick us up the next day and take us to the many places we were interested in seeing, but we had already contacted CRIBA and were to meet with Henri Hannon for the next two days.

The next day, Henri Hannon came down from Liege. We had contacted him earlier and was expecting him. Henry picked us up the next morning and drove us all over Belgium to see monuments that were erected at different battle sites. I don’t think he missed one. The second day, we visited more sites that he thought we had missed the first day. About mid-day his car broke down and he had to call a wrecker. This was the biggest wrecker I ever saw. The cab would hold at least eight people. The wrecker hauled us back to his house so that we got to meet his family. He called a friend and he was there when we got there. In an hour he had the car fixed and Henri took us back to our hotel.

After our three days were up at our hotel, we had to locate another place to stay, but the manager of the hotel was gracious enough to find us another place, just down the street. They did not speak English but we got along just fine. The next three days were spent with Adda and Willy. They would pick us up each morning and we would spend the entire day driving to Bastogne, a German cemetery and Luxembourg. In Bastogne, they had erected a huge memorial and nearby there is a museum. It is a site to be seen. One evening we had a lovely dinner at their home. It was a feast.

There was going to be a memorial at Parkers Crossroads and we stayed for that the next day. It was a ceremony I will never forget, the band, laying flowers, speakers. All were a moving experience. They had a number of dignitaries present and we met them all. They had both of us in the middle of them, taking pictures and the TV cameras were also there recording it all. After the picture taking, they had a big reception at the town hall, with plenty of food and drinks. Many people wanted to talk with us and make dinner plans with us. Our time was so limited that it was not possible to accept. The Belgian people could not do enough for us. They are wonderful people and say they will never forget the Americans who fought for them.

On June 6, there was an elaborate ceremony at the site of the Malmedy Massacre. There were dignitaries from all over for the ceremony. We were invited to attend and put with the honored guests. There is a long stone wall, about 100 feet long with the names of the 86 GIs killed there by the Germans. It was very moving.

After our three days ended and we said our goodbyes, we headed up the Rhine River for some sight seeing in Germany and before you knew it, our ten days were up and we were on our way home with some wonderful new found friends in our hearts. The towns in Germany are all neat and clean. We then headed up along the Mosel River. All along the river are grape vines growing up the hill sides. Some of the hills look straight up and down. We stayed the night at a resort town called Cochem. We then headed for Holland, which like the rest of the area, very neat and clean. We then headed for the coast, but on the way, we stopped at the Henri-Chapelle American National Cemetery. We wandered around and located many of the grave sites of GIs from the 424th. It was very emotional, and as I stood there, I could not speak. On the way to the coast, we stopped at a small town named Gent and did some shopping. Then to Brussels. The last day, after a nice breakfast at our hotel, we headed for the airport, AND GOT LOST! But the first man we asked, put us on the right direction. Phil checked in the car while we checked in. On our plane, coming home, there were three classes: first, business and coach. We were in coach and asked if we could move up into business, which we did. We had one entire row across the plane to ourselves. We could lay down when we wanted.

We had a wonderful time and should have taken another five days. I would advise anyone to take that trip and contact CRIBA. We landed in Chicago the next morning, where we said our goodbyes. The Belgian people are the greatest people in the world. They bent over backwards to show us a good time. This was one of the best trips we have ever taken.

Editorial Note: I had asked both Bob Homan and Phil Gerlach to describe their trip to Belgium. Then I received a pleasant surprise, both wrote, describing their trip. After reading the two letters, I thought putting the two together would make it very descriptive. I hope I have not offended either one of them. Gerlach is in standard type and Homan is in italics type. I hope each of you enjoyed it as much as I did.

BELGIAN TEACHER WRITES

On the opposite page is reproduced, a letter received by Phil Gerlach from a Belgian school teacher, Felix Derison. He is a member of the CRIBA (Center of Research About The Battle of The Bulge). Basically, his letter is a request for any of us to write to him regarding your experiences during The Bulge. I found it very interesting that this Belgian school teacher would like to hear from his students as well as other Belgians to keep alive the knowledge and experiences of WW II and specifically The Bulge.

If you will please go back into the article right above this and reread the line written by Bob Homan, while visiting The Henri-Chapelle American National Cemetery, "We wandered around and located many of the grave sites of GIs from the 424th. It was very emotional, and as I stood there, I could not speak.”

Please take some time and write to Felix Derison. Tell him about Company D, 424th Combat Infantry Regiment.
Dear Sir,

Allow me to introduce myself and explain the purpose of this letter.

I'm a member of the C.R.I.B.A. (Center of research about the battle of the Buldge). I'm 35 years old and teach in an elementary school. I've undertaken a few years ago a work about the second world war more especially about the action of the U.S. Army that helped so much to free my country.

In the course of my search, I found already a lot of belgian documents and read a lot of american books. I'm more interested by personnal stories of the Veterans who lived, fought, have been p.o.w. in Belgium or in Europe.

Could I ask you to collaborate in my search?

I do it to not let forget what U.S.A. did for us and I want the children of the futur generations always remember what you did for my country, for my parents, for me and my children. Bearing witness to your experience in my country, maybe sending me any copy of documents or picture you'd posses would bring precious elements to me.

Please, excuse my "elementary" English!
Hoping to receive some news from you, I remain yours sincerely.
FOOTLOCKER STUFF......

The week just prior to and the week of Independence Day, The Sutters, Burnie and Rozetta traveled from Moline, IL to Hershey, PA to visit their daughter Sandy and husband. On Thursday, June 28, they had a get together at the Richards home and invited some former GI friends. Norm Simmons who lives nearby in the Harrisburg area attended. Although invited, I had to decline because of my wife’s physical condition. However, on Tuesday, July 2nd, The Sutters accompanied by daughter Sandy drove down to Crofton, MD and paid the Rays a visit. We had a terrific day and if we could have converted the words to dollars, we would have all been millionaires. I only wish I had turned on my tape recorder. Thanks to you all. I only wish they could attend the Roanoke reunion.

As I continue to search for additional past members of Company D, I have been able to locate Leon J Kerns, living in Bellefontaine, Ohio. Naturally I surprised him and we had a real nice talk. I mailed him past issues of The Bugle, a copy of The Cub and an application for The 106th Association. I have received a phone call from John Kline telling me that he has received Leon’s papers. Leon has a wife who is ill and having experienced that I extend my sympathies and prayers. Leon joined us at Atterbury. How about everyone extending best wishes to Leon and family.

Newest on the found list, or maybe I should say refound list is a fellow “Golden Lion” named William A. “Bill” French. Bill, like myself was a long ago member, having been a member of the Association as well as the Detroit Chapter, when at one time there was such. Bill then moved to the Cleveland, OH area and then “retired” to Myrtle Beach, SC. Bill and I had a good talk and I sent him a package, but I guess it hasn’t done the trick getting him into the association again. Maybe now that FRAN has gone by, Bill will send in his application and dues. By the way, assisting in getting the Detroit Chapter started in those days was Mr and Mrs David Woodson, Sr and their daughter. They were the parents of David Jr. who was my number two man when we went into combat. David was lost in the Bulge. I met them at the first reunion in Indianapolis.

I must tell this story on myself, because in doing what I thought was a pretty thorough job of mailing out the previous issue of The Bugle, I sealed, addressed, and stamped an envelope and mailed AN EMPTY envelope to Mrs Eugene Gradin in Iowa. To her I extend my most sincere apology. To make matters worse, the post office charged her an additional 11 cents postage due, for an empty envelope. That part made me angry at myself, and the post office. My printer friend has been giving me the envelopes, ran out of the white 6 x 9s and gave the large 10 x 13s to finish my mailing. I had enough Kraft and white ones to complete the mailing for the boys and used the large white ones for families. If I mailed empty envelopes to any of you, or if additional postage due was charged, I apologize and would like to hear from you. Out of the whole mess, caused to Mrs Gradin was a wonderful telephone conversation with Don Gradin, Gene’s eldest son. He is a real student of the war in Europe and it was a satisfying conversation. I removed a couple of V-Mail that I had received from Gene while we were still at Atterbury and he was in England, and mailed them to Don.

I noticed in the latest correspondence that I received from John Kline, Editor (and Senior - Vice President of the Association this year) The Cub, a real nice fellow that most of us affectionately called “Swede” has paid his dues and joined the association. Welcome aboard Howard Swenson. Swede, excuse me, Howard left us at Fort Jackson and went off to be an airplane pilot. According to Mr. Swenson, after being there for a while, they found a heart murmur, or at least something wrong with the heart, so they washed him out of the pilot program and sent him back to the infantry. From there he bounced around and finally got a discharge. Swede, we thought we were a lot of problems in training, but cause heart problems??? But Swenson got into law enforcement and stayed with it long enough to retire. Do retired law enforcement men in Minnesota go fishing when they retire. I looked on the map to find Annandale, MN and that isn’t far from the headwaters of the Mississippi. If you want to get a message downriver to Burnie Sutter, just put it in an empty beer bottle and cork it. All kidding aside, welcome home to the 106th Division Association.

I haven’t been able to make contact with Paul or Ellie Morris for quite some time. Last contact with them, I believe they said that they were trying to put their home on the market and get into something smaller and easier to take care of. Paul and Ellie, we wish you nothing but the best. I hope I can make contact with you, or maybe someone else might call them.

I’m going to put Frank Koehler on the spot and get a commitment out of him for Nashville ’97. Maybe Walter Bridges can let me know the golf course situation in and around Nashville. Frank lives on the golf courses up and down the east coast, so maybe we can entice him to “play west.” The Morris’ used to burn up the golf courses, maybe we could get them together with Frank Koehler. I know you are out there, reading and listening Frank...what say, will you commit to ’97 in Nashville?

Bob Homan, maybe you can twist Phil Gerlach’s arm and get him into Nashville. I looked it up on a ’97 calendar and here is the numbers, so start making your reservations: August 29, 30, 31 and Labor Day, Monday September 1. A prize to the one who makes the first reservation! Walter, when will they start accepting reservations?

As some of you may know, Judge Walter Bridges who is also on the Association Board of Directors, is also Chairman of one of the committees for the Nashville Reunion. When you take a look at a map and locate Hueytown, Alabama, southwest of Birmingham, and then locate Nashville up in the center of Tennessee, you can see the “communications” problems that he has being part of a reunion committee. But I believe it all fits into a phrase called “labor of loves.” These are the kinds of people who have been working to see that we have fun. With all things considered, that’s one reason why the Association has moved in the direction of a commercial company to do the workload of presenting the reunions.

ATTEND A DECEMBER MINI-REUNION AND HAVE FUN

Continued Next Column
ROLL CALL

*Anthony (Tony) Barredo
35 High Street
Winsted, CT 06098
*Walter Bridges
225 1st Ave
Huey, AL 35023
*Robert L. Berry
P.O. Box 1484
Anaduas, AL 36420
*Fred F. Chernow
4038 Wooded Drive
Colgate, WI 53017
*Myron B. Dickerson
N280 Mount Washington Dr
Hoodspeth, WA 98548
*William A. Domiano
509 St. Paul Ave.
Cliffside Park, NJ 07010
*Kenneth Dux
403 E. 2nd St.
Neillsville, WI 54456
*Val O. Eron
RR #2, Box 161
Cass Lake, MN 56633
*William A. French
112 Lexington Pl.
Myrtle Beach, SC 29579
*Phillip E. Gerlach
4112 Rice St.
Viroqua Heights, WI 35126
*Joseph N. Goodwin
850 Abbey Drive
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137
*Gordon Hawn
1509 River Bluff Blvd
Rockford, IL 61103
*Robert Homan
1614 Holly Dr.
Jonesville, WI 53546
*Steve Jablonsky
Box 425
Dixon, IL 61021
*Leon J. Kerns
631 Hamilton St.
Bellevontaine, OH 43313
*Franklin R. Koehler
243 Torrey Pines Rd.
Toms River, NJ 08757
*Robert W. Landis
210 Indian Mountain Lakes
Albrightsville, PA 18210
*Leon J. Langlois
543 Hanover St.
Manchester, NH 03104

THE SILENT CORPS

The following names are those men that in my searching, or have been reported to me, found they have joined the “Silent Corps.”

Pfc Herman Bavarisco KIA 1944
T/Sgt Carl J Kerin 1995
1Lt John Berthias KIA 1944
1Lt John P Kilkenny, Jr KIA 1944
T/Sgt William G Berri 1996
Pfc Charles Kossage 1989
Pfc William H Bingle KIA 1944
T/Sgt Nels Moore 1993
Pfc James W Blythe 1991
Pfc Michael Petrinio 1994
1/Gt Robert Bothie 1993
Maj Robert W Preucel (M.D.) 1993
Pvt Eugene B Clifton KIA 1944
Pfc Clarence Saffley 1987
LCpl Charles H Costigan 1988
1Lt Kenneth Terry 1985
Joseph D. Antonio KIA 1944
Maj Russell Terry 1985
Pvt James J Detore KIA 1944
Sgt Robert Triglowne 1985
Sgt Louis Ferretti 1981
1Lt Claude VanEmelen KIA 1944
Sgt John Frizzell KIA 1944
Sgt Robert Triglowne 1985
Sgt William G Russell 1990
Pfc E. R. Watson KIA 1944
Pfc William F Graden 1994
Maj George Warner 1994
1/Gt Michael Serriano 1976
Sgt Ellis R. Watson KIA 1944
1Lt George T Hurley 1984
Pfc David Woodson, Jr KIA 1944
T/Sgt Robert Huchko 1995

OFFICERS CALL

Following are names of Officers who served with D Company.
If you can remember additional names, please supply them.

Capt John P Foley (First CO)
1Lt John Berthias (First EXO)
2Lt Kenneth Tewell (1st Platoon)
2Lt Allen F Russell (2nd Platoon & 2nd CO)
2Lt Russell Terry (3rd Platoon)
1Lt Claudia VanEmelen (2nd Platoon)
1Lt E. C. Johnson
1Lt Lawrence E Randall
2Lt Cecil Ayers
2Lt Donald K White
2Lt Gene O Yarnell
1Lt Harry M Wooldridge
Capt Wesley D Griffin
Capt Ralph K Lee
Capt Roy Burks
Capt Robert W Preucel (CO in US & ETO)
1Lt Charles H Costigan (EXO US & CO ETO)
1Lt G. K. Flewelling (2nd Platoon-KIA)
2Lt John P Kilkenny, Jr (3rd Platoon-KIA)
2Lt Plummer (1st Platoon)
2Lt Jack E. Clifton
2Lt William S. Boucoulala
2Lt Allen G Smith
2Lt William C Sanderson
2Lt Anthony M Yanulaitis (BF Comm)
2Lt George Warner (ETO OCS)

MAKE YOUR PLANS NOW
FOR NASHVILLE, MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS LATER