

325 Glider Infantry Association 82nd Airborne Division



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Spring 2012

Log on to 325gliderinfantry.org

Spring 2012



Remember Me



Robert Hunker, Dec 25, 1945

CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

I don't know how many of you enjoy looking at old pictures, but I sure do. When you think about it, it's part of our history. Looking back and seeing where we have been, remembering old friends, and what we have done. Each picture tells a story...some we would like to forget and some that brings back good memories. I often get my pictures out that I took at different reunions and remembering so many of the boys who have gone on and the fun we had. Oh, what great memories. I think of the things in life I would loved to have taken pictures of but having no camera or film at the time, I was not able to do so. I was thinking the other day, I have pictures some of the boys or their family would love to have and I'm sure some of you do also. Why don't we try to share them? Rick suggested we mail some pictures to him to put on our web page. Some of us have always taken picture albums to the reunions and every one seem to enjoy looking at them. Think about it.

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Why not share your WW II photographs? Send to Rick with story line.



Chairman's Corner, continued...

In our last Tow Line we reported the loss of our good friend Martin Stahel. Well, we have lost another good man, Lester Schwarm. These are the ones that have been reported. I'm afraid there might be others. We are at that age where we can expect that. Lester served as our Vice Chairman a few years back. You always expected to see him and Faye at our reunions. He made several friends over in France after the war. I think his daughter went with him the last time he went over. And speaking of pictures, I have some great ones of these two men, I think their families would like to see. Let's mail some to Rick and try to put the names with the picture.

What about another reunion???? Wes wants to have a mini reunion in Falmouth, his home town, in early spring or early fall of this year. He and Ruth have a very good friend that is willing to help put one on...this young lady is the kind of friend we all would like to have. She thinks the world of Ruth and Wes. Wes is having an article in this Tow Line giving us all the information about the affair. He needs a response right away in order to make the plans. I'm sure it would be a first class and an enjoyable reunion. They have so much to offer up there. It would be a great way to close out the reunions, even better than the one in Charlotte. Six or more would be a good number to put this on with. Get back with Wes as soon as possible.

I have talked with several of the boys in the past few months, Tony Vallos, Jack Cimino, Bob Bridge, George Fisanich, Wes Ko, Lewis Stranburg, Clint Riddle, Eugene Rogers, Dick Weese, and others, even some of the ladies, Wilma Pierce, Faye Schwarm, and Mabeline Stahel. We all have some kind of little problem, but it sure could be a lot worse. I call Leonard and Jeanette Weinstein, but Leonard is unable to talk on the phone.

Think about the pictures, get back with Wes and get on that phone and call someone, THEY sure would like to hear from you.

Good Luck and Good Health,

Jesse



Our condolences to their Families

Carl H. Anderson, M Co, 325 GIR, passed away September 16, 2011. An All American member of the Badger State Chapter of the 82nd AB Association, Carl served with M/325 from June, 1944 to June, 1946. He is survived by two children.

George M. Armstrong, H Co, 325 GIR – passed away November 2, 2011. A member of the Vulcan Chapter of the 82nd AB Association, George served from March, 1945 to July 1946. He is survived by his wife Edna and 3 children.

Herbert S. Belins, G Co, 325 GIR, passed away February 12, 2011. An All American member of CPL Edward A Slavin Chapter of the 82nd AB Association, Herb served with G/325 from July, 1944 to February, 1945.

Louis E. Kaiden, HH Co, 325 GIR, passed away September 16, 2011. An All American member of the Greater Daytona Chapter of the 82nd AB Association, Louis served with HHC/325 from October, 1946 to May, 1949. He is survived by his wife Pauly and six children.

Benjamin F. Norman, Jr., I Co, 325 GIR, passed away December 4, 2011. An All American member of the Gen M B Ridgeway Chapter of the 82nd AB Association, Ben served with I Co 3/325 from November, 1945 to January, 1946. He is survived by his wife Nada (Tilley) and five children.

Lester W. Schwarm, 89, H Co, 325 GIR passed away January 15, 2012. Les participated in the invasion of Holland, the Battle of the Bulge, met the Russian Army at the Elbe River and the Army of Occupation in Berlin, Germany. Les was awarded the Good Conduct Medal, American Campaign Medal, Europe-Africa-Middle East Ribbon with 3 bronze battle stars and one invasion arrowhead, the Victory Medal WWII, Army Occupation medal and the Bronze Star. He was a member of both the 325 Glider Infantry Association and the 82nd Airborne Association as well as the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, Inc. He is survived by his wife, Faye, 2 sons, 2 daughters, ten grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

(Taps, continued, on Page 3)

Taps, continued...

James E. Bryant, 86, F Co, 325, passed away February 27, 2011. James received the Silver and Bronze Stars for his service in World War II and was the author of "Flying Coffins over Europe." Jim was also a dedicated volunteer at the National D-Day Museum.

Editor's Note: Jim's obituary was sent-in by Joe Gwaltney, F Co, who wrote "Attached is the obituary for my good buddy, Jim Bryant. Jim was a member of F Co and won the Silver Star for his actions at Woody's Crossroads." 'Woody's Crossroads' was the name given by 325 men to the Fraicture Crossroads where F Co made a heroic stand against elements of the 2nd SS Panzer Division during the Battle of the Bulge.

Claude Bogardus, 85, 325 Glider Infantry, passed away October 4, 2011, at his home in Taylorsville, Georgia. Claude, who with Tom Richley and Tom Nies founded the international company now known as Cincom. Claude enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1944 and served with the 82nd Airborne in Europe and England until 1946. He is survived by his children Paul, Joan, Charles, Christopher, and Sibyl; his sister Judith Boyer; four grandchildren; and one nephew. At his request there will be no burial or memorial service.

Editor's Note: Claude's obituary was sent-in by George Fisanich, who wrote:

My friend Claude,
Claude and I came from different worlds... he from Georgia and I from Pennsylvania, yet much of our lives were similar. Our education was interrupted by World War II, but at the same time our experiences in that conflict certainly broadened our education.
My Georgian friend, whether by accident or choice, refused to adopt many of the coarse sayings and bad English grammar so prevalent in the military. One would never hear Claude say "I don't have no weapon" or use vulgarity in describing any superior or directive passed down from higher authority.
How does one forget a friend who encouraged me to continue my education either via the GI Bill or otherwise to help make myself and those around me better persons?
Claude. Farewell my friend.
George Fisanich

Static Line Deaths

George Fisanich also sent in a list of those who have passed that he pulled from the latest "Static Line." All of these men were World War II veterans and the Static Line notes that while these

deaths were in 2010 and 2011 - they are being published in order that they were received.

Buss, Charles F. - C Company 05/10/09 Toms River. NJ

Groscup, Arthur L. - HQ 325 10/13/10 South Charleston. WV

Dews, Thomas M. - 325 GIR 05/25/11 Covington. GA

Esposito, Louis P. - UNIT UNK 05/02/11 Hilliard. OH

Galloway, Ernest M. - HHC 325 03/05/10 ADDRESS UNK

Kaiden, Louis E. - 325 09/16/11 Jacksonville. FL

Loudtke, Howard - 325 03/15/11 Lincoln NE

Marrufo, Norberto - 325 05/21/11 El Paso TX

Myers, John Henry III - 325 06/11/10 Dallas TX



If you hear of any other fellow 325 vets or spouses who have passed, please pass whatever information you have along so we can keep our membership updated. Thank you!



Reunion?

Will you attend?

Ruth and Wesley Ko with your consent and attendance would like to host a reunion for the 325 membership in Falmouth, MA early June 2012.

Your cost would be to fly to Boston or drive to Falmouth and 3 nights stay at Shoreway Acres Resort which would include a full breakfast. Price, \$99 per room and up. We have a very good friend and neighbor with much interest in the 325GIR, WWII activities and will subsidize our activities in Falmouth.

Your flight to Boston will be met by a limousine for the 70 mile trip to Falmouth and return at the end of the reunion.

(**Reunion**, continued Page 4)

We need YOUR input!

Reunion, continued...

All planned activities - such Dinner Banquet, trips, boat or sail for lunch on Martha's Vineyard and transportation - are covered.

Advise if you are interested; email wes325@gmail.com of your intentions or phone or snail mail.

HOPE TO SEE YOU IN FALMOUTH!



Letters

The following letter courtesy George Fisanich:

Dear George,

Enclosed please find my check to cover 2012 dues. I apologize for the lateness.

A school teacher from Michigan wrote to me back in September asking if I had any first person account from my Father concerning the liberation of the Woblen concentration camp beyond the letter that he wrote to his sister that appeared in "Glide to Glory." He was doing research for the Holocaust Museum. While I had nothing additional from my Father I did have a first person account from my Mother's cousin who was an Army nurse traveling just behind the 82nd. Hers was the first medical unit into the camp following its liberation and she wrote in great detail to her Mother about the camp and the condition of the prisoners. I sent a copy of her letter to Mr. Goodspeed and he sent me an information packet about the camp which I found very interesting. I did not know that the camp had no gas chamber and no crematorium and that it was strictly a starvation camp where prisoners were sent to from other camps that the Germans were trying to depopulate before they were overrun by Allied forces. Mr. Goodspeed in his letter to me says that he would be pleased to send one of these information packets to any 82nd veteran or veteran family member. I am enclosing Mr. Goodspeed's address for publication in the next 'Tow Line.' While the subject matter may be unpleasant it's part of the history that we must pass on.

Mr. Jim Goodspeed
Fulton High School
8060 Ely Highway
Middelton, Michigan 48856

Of particular interest to me in the Winter 2011 issue of The Tow Line was Jesse's mention of a Glider Certificate and that Wesley Ko had them. Was Jesse speaking about the Glider Honor Roll or something completely different? I have my Father's original Honor Roll framed and hanging in my den with all my Father's medals but if the certificate is something different I would like to have that as well.

Sincerely
Bill Bergan

Editor's Note: George spoke to Jesse regarding Bill's request and they are getting a Glider Certificate to him in honor of his Father.



The following email was sent directly to your editor from John Jacobs:

Hello,

I happened to run across this web site and my friend was in the 82nd Airborne Division and I was wondering if you could give me some information about his time in the service. If you can thank you:

Preston Schilling Funeral Home Web Site -- January 15, 2008:

Robert Eugene Batt

(March 19, 1922 - January 15, 2008)

DIXON, Illinois -- Robert Eugene Batt, 85, of Dixon, died Tuesday, January 15, 2008, at Katherine Shaw Bethea Hospital, Dixon. He was a quarry blaster and driller for Medusa Portland Cement Company and Lonestar Industries for 28 years, prior to his retirement in 1983.

Mr. Batt was born March 19, 1922, in Wayne City, IL. He married Gloria M. Slothower on December 9, 1952, in Dixon. Bob served in the United States Army in the 325th Glider Infantry of the 82nd Airborne Division as part of the European African Middle Eastern Campaign and received the E.A.M.E. Campaign Metal, the Purple Heart, and the Bronze Star. He was a member of the Dixon Elk's Lodge B.P.O.E. #779 and the American Legion Post 12, Dixon. Bob treasured time with his family and enjoyed traveling and boating.

(Letters, continued Page 5)

You can help improve our newsletter by participating!

Letters, continued...

Thank you for any response to my inquiry . . . my address is John W. Jacobs, 918 Oak Court, Dixon, Illinois 61021 and my email address is: jwjake@grics.net



The following letter (it is actually a compilation of two emails) comes from our friend in the UK, Adam Berry:

Hi Rick,

Hope you don't mind me contacting you. Thought I would give you an update on the memorial project.

It is with a smile on my face that I am able to inform you that the memorial project for the 325th and 504th PIR memorials is now live and accepting donations. The website for the project is <http://www.allamericanmemorials.co.uk> and I have also set up a facebook page which can be found here <http://www.facebook.com/pages/All-Americans-Memorial-Project/221340627934691>

All is going well, and it is gathering pace, and as the summer months draw closer and the days draw longer some fundraising events are in the pipeline. I managed to get an article posted in the local newspaper that is read by more than 60,000 people so hopefully this will have an effect.

If you could perhaps forward this E-mail to any friends or counterparts who may be interested in the memorials, and of course any publications that you may send out I would be very appreciative indeed. I have so far discovered drumming up support is harder than it first appeared so any help I can get I will grab with both hands.

I also wondered if you might have any contact with veterans of E Company, 325th? I am trying to research something for a friend whose father was in E Company.

Regards, Adam

Editor's Note: You can either email Adam directly at aberry@initsys.co.uk or drop me a line and I'll send your contact information to him.



Our last letter is from our friend Lee Travelstead in Florida. Lee wanted to follow-up on the discussion in the last Tow Line regarding the surviving 325 veterans of Normandy. Lee wrote:

We really need your input!

And Raymond Nelson, Age 95, long-time 1st Sgt of F Co, 2nd Bn, 401, 101st/ K Co, 3rd Bn, 325, 82nd AB. Raymond, who lives up in Beloit, Wisconsin, called me recently to notify me of a book. I had not spoken with him since 1944! As a Sargent, Lee wrote, there was 'none better' than Raymond Nelson.

Editor's Note: So now we have the following list of 325 veterans of the Normandy Invasion: Clinton Riddle, Herb Heubsen, Louis Strandberg, Joe Colmer, Harold Owens, Paul Pearson, Delbert Humpston, Lee Travelstead and Raymond Nelson. If there is anyone we have left out please contact your Editor and let me know!



SUBMISSIONS

Our first submission is an article sent-in by Dave Bronson. Sadly, it features the late Les Schwarm in what was probably his last interview:

Veterans group holds final Battle of the Bulge memorial before disbanding

The northern Wisconsin chapter of Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge -- the nation's first chapter established for veterans of the World War II battle -- held its final ceremony Friday and will disband within the next two weeks.

About 20 people attended the ceremony outside the Marathon County Courthouse to remember the start of the Battle of the Bulge on Dec. 16, 1944, which continued across the fields and forests of Germany, Belgium, France and Luxembourg until Jan. 25, 1945. The crowd also saw the last formal gathering of the northern Wisconsin chapter, which formed in 1982 with 150 members. Fewer than 10 members still are living, and "it just doesn't pay to go anymore," chapter President Clarence Marschall said Friday.

Marschall, 89, who served as a radio relay operator with the U.S. Army's 187th Signal Repair Company, said he's worried about the battle fading from the minds of veterans and their families, since "it just seems that the younger crowd, they're not really interested," he said.

Lester Schwarm, 89, of Wausau, still carries a piece of the Battle of the Bulge in his right thumb. The tiny, dark-colored pebble or piece of shrapnel -- he wasn't sure which -- lodged under his skin after a mortar exploded near him in late December 1944 as he fought with the Army's 325th Glider Infantry Regiment of the 82nd Airborne Division in Belgium. Schwarm said Thursday that, even though the veterans' chapter is disbanding, he hopes younger generations will carry on their memories and history.

(Submissions, continued Page 6)

Submissions, continued...

"When they sit down for their Christmas dinner, besides remembering the birth of Christ, people should remember the Battle of the Bulge and those that gave the ultimate (sacrifice)," he said. "And, any of (the veterans), in any of the wars. It's the soldier that's kept this country free, not the politicians." Between six and 10 other chapters across the country also have disbanded in the past three years, said Ralph Bozorth, treasurer of the nonprofit Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge group based in Philadelphia. More than 50 chapters remain active, including one chapter in Belgium.

"The main reason for the organization is not so much to remind people about the battle, but the people who fought in the battle," Bozorth said by telephone Friday.

'We could've been the best of friends'

Schwarm was 20 years old when he was drafted by the U.S. Army, two years and one day before the Battle of the Bulge started. Like other soldiers, he battled not only the German army, but also the freezing European winter.

"I never saw the inside of a building," Schwarm recalled. "... I just think we accepted it; we didn't make nothing of it."

As a mortar gunner, Cpl. Schwarm and three other men were assigned to a single 81mm mortar capable of hitting the enemy from two to three miles away, he said. Because mortars could keep the Germans out of close range, the American gunners also were targets of German mortars -- something Schwarm said gave him a sense of solidarity more than 60 years later.

"Had I met these guys that were firing them shells at me, in the tavern or church or something like that, we could've been the best of friends," he said. "That's how stupid war is." Schwarm couldn't remember exactly how many fellow soldiers died on the battlefields around him -- only that "we lost plenty of them." More than 19,000 American troops were killed in action during the battle, according to the Army.

Schwarm and his fellow soldiers talked about what they would do when they returned home as a way to stay positive about the battle. In more than six decades since the battle, Schwarm said he's never been shy about sharing his experiences. "I don't feel that I have overly talked about it, but I don't feel that I didn't talk about it," he said.

Schwarm said the battle didn't leave lasting scars on him. But that one month left him with a lifetime of memories, he said. "The thing I have to say about it is, you don't live a day without remembering," he said.

Although the local Battle of the Bulge chapter will disband, a memorial at the county courthouse, where Friday's ceremony was held, remains and includes a sentiment from Sir Winston Churchill.

"This is undoubtedly the greatest American battle of the war and will, I believe, be regarded as an ever famous American victory," the memorial reads.



The following story was sent to us by our friend in Belgium, Emile Lacroix:

Scouts March Through History

HOHENFELS, Germany -- Covered in mud, Clinton Schwarz crouched in the back of an armored jeep parked along a road in Hierlot, Belgium, his M2, 50-caliber machine gun trained down the muddy lane in anticipation of the advancing German line.

Though this could be a description during the Battle of the Bulge, it was in fact a re-enactment, and Schwarz is not a soldier, but an Eagle Scout in Hohenfels' Boy Scout Troop 303.



Three times a year, Belgium re-enactment groups gather across the country to pay tribute to the Soldiers who fought and died in one of the bloodiest battles of the Second World War.

Remembrance marches are held along actual paths tropped by troops, and re-enactors are positioned to add ambience and to talk with participants about the history of the battle.

"Every year they choose different groups to retrace their steps throughout the battle, and this year they followed the 82nd Airborne Division," said Schwarz. The march specifically followed 24 kilometers along the trail of the 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment.

Schwarz attended the march along with 13 fellow troop members, in a trip that was initially inspired by Lt. Col. Bryan E. Denny, brigade senior trainer at Hohenfels. As a participant of the "Remember" re-enactment group out of Belgium, Denny had participated in this re-enactment before.

(Submissions, continued Page 7)

Submissions, continued...

"I wanted to get Troop 303 and the Remember guys together and have them learn something from one another," Denny said. When he realized he was going to have to miss out on the trip, Denny decided to send a replacement to -- literally -- fill his shoes.

"It occurred to me that Clinton (Schwarz) is about my size, and this would be a unique way for him to participate in this," said Denny. "And this guy looks like one of the Soldiers from World War II!"

Apparently, Denny isn't the only person who thought so.

"There was a veteran from this division marching by," Schwarz said. "He told me I looked like one of his friends who had been fighting in this general area, and who had been lost up there."

"He said he had been about 19 when he was in the war, and I was one of the only people of age," said Schwarz, who is 16. "I felt like I was in place for that. He wasn't so much telling me so I would know; it was more that it stunned him a little bit and brought back some memories."

"That was a real highlight of the event," Schwarz added. "He patted me on the shoulder, smiled and walked away."

Schwarz said he and his fellow re-enactors took their responsibility to present the troops accurately very seriously.

"I had to have food that was from there. They even took some of the food and put it in ration boxes so that it looked like you were eating the same food that the Soldiers did," he said.

When the day started, Schwarz said he felt excited like "a little kid playing war," but as time wore on, his perspective shifted.

"I realized I was in exactly the same place, in the same scenario and situation as the guys who fought there, in the same foxholes that they fought, and died, and won in. It was really cool to re-enact that, like we were reliving what they did. I knew it was a re-enactment, but I felt like I was in it," he said.

"When that veteran came up, it really set in what we were doing, and how important it is that we remember it," he added.

While he may have been the only one with a complete World War II kit, Schwarz wasn't the only scout to get an up-close look at a Soldier's life. The Remember group took Troop 303 under its wing, making them honorary members and even allowing the scouts to camp out with the regiment on the battlefield.

Scoutmaster Kirstin Reed explained that the scouts' governing group, the Transatlantic Council, provides a 20-page Battle of the Bulge historic trail document, and most troops take the hike, stop off in the museum, and answer the questions.

"We got to camp with these guys on a farm, cook out in the field," she said. "We had 11-year-old boys out there living just like on the battlefield; no facilities, no running water, but not a single complaint. They had so much fun!"



"They really got to see how Soldiers could have lived in the field during World War II," Denny added.

"We owe a tremendous debt to (the Remember group) because they're not Americans, but they keep the spirit of what our grandfathers did alive," said Denny.

"They do this stuff, and most of the time they're just trying to express what our grandfathers did to a bunch of Belgium kids running around, but this time they have a chance to talk with American kids about it. These are the subject experts on the battlefield and to get to talk to a bunch of American scouts about their own history was pretty special," Denny said.

For Schwarz, experiences like this are what make scouting with Troop 303 so special. Having scouted in the States for three years, Schwarz said he always had lots of fun, but never experienced the sense of growth that he feels here.

"Being over here in Europe and doing these things that changed the world and the outcome of our lives, and you get to experience a part of that," he said. "You come back from these trips here, and you get boys who are changing just over a weekend, little bit by little bit."



Adam Berry sent us the following story from the United Kingdom on his efforts to have memorials established to honor the 82nd AB. The story ran in the Leicester Mercury on-line newspaper on March 12, 20112:

(Submissions, continued Page 8)

Submissions, continued...

Memorial plan to honour county-based US troops

Memorials could be put up in honour of American troops who were based in Leicestershire before they fought in the Second World War.

Two regiments of the US Army's 82nd Airborne Division lived in camps just outside the city in early 1944 as they prepared for operations in Europe.

The men of the 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment – nicknamed the Devils in Baggy Pants – were stationed in Evington from April to September.



Members of the 504th displaying how they got their nickname.

The 325th Glider Infantry Regiment (GIR) was based down the road at Scraptoft.



Members of the 325 preparing to board Horsa gliders for the Normandy Invasion.

Battlefield historian Adam Berry, 25, from Ashby, has launched a project to see memorials built to the troops after researching their campaigns.



Adam Berry posing with 82nd AB artifacts.

He said: "I became fascinated by the 82nd Airborne as a teenager when I learned that they were camped here on our doorsteps.

"To me they were real heroes but while the 505th and 508th Parachute Infantry Regiments, who camped at Quorn and Wollaton Hall, near Nottingham, respectively, have got memorials in their honour, one thing that frustrated me for years was the lack of a memorial to the remaining regiments.

"I set up this memorial project not only to raise funds but awareness of the feats of these legendary men who for a short while made Leicestershire their home." Adam wants to put up a memorial at each site, which will be made of black slate from North Wales and will cost about £1,500 each.

The money will come from donations and through fund-raising events.

The 504th's Camp Stoughton is now the site of Evington Arboretum, in Shady Lane. They were based there from April 1944 through to September 7.

Phil Rosenkrantz, 62, from California, whose uncle Staff Sergeant David Rosenkrantz was killed fighting in Holland, said: "It was heartwarming to hear about the memorial planned for the men of the 504th. The English were very gracious to our fighting men."

(Submissions, continued Page 9)

Submissions, continued

A spokesman for Leicester City Council, which owns the arboretum site, said: "We support Mr Berry's proposals for this memorial and we will continue to work closely with him to help make this happen."

The 325th GIR were based at Camp March Hare – a former German prisoner of war site which is now farmland, off Beeby Lane, Scraftoft – from early 1944 until June 7, when they flew into Normandy to support the D-Day landings.

Adam is in talks with Scraftoft Parish Council over the location of the 325th GIR memorial. For more details, or to make a donation, visit: www.allamericanmemorials.co.uk



Remember our friend Emile LaCroix who organizes the March in the Footsteps of the 83nd Airborne? The US Army has officially recognized his dedication to preserving the memory of the 82nd Airborne:

All,

During the banquet after the march "In the footsteps of the 82nd Airborne Division" this February 25, 2012, I was presented an Award Medal by Larry Mallett talking in the name of US Army for my dedication at the history and tribute to the troopers of the 82nd Airborne Division.

Very proud of this award, I would share this with you.



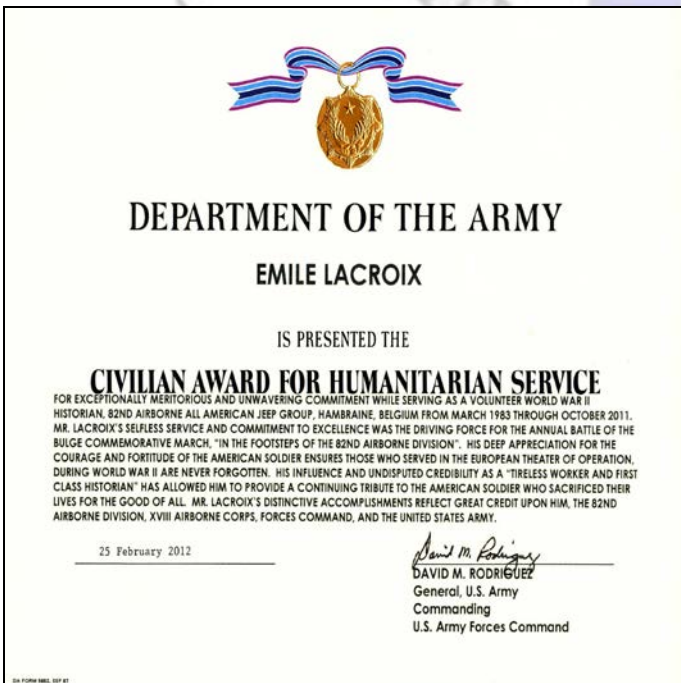
Emile (on the left) and Philippe Jenaux after laying a wreath at the 508th monument.



On the stage at the Award presentation, Emile (on left, wearing Colonel insignia) with Ray Fary (saluting) veteran of the 80th AA Bn / 82nd AB who was at the Bulge.

I wanted also to tell you that this 508PIR march was also traveling in the area where the 325 started the counter-attack on January 3 and the following days starting from Les-Villettes through the villages of Hierlot, La Chapelle (where we had the lunch time) and Odrimont.

(Submissions, continued Page 10)

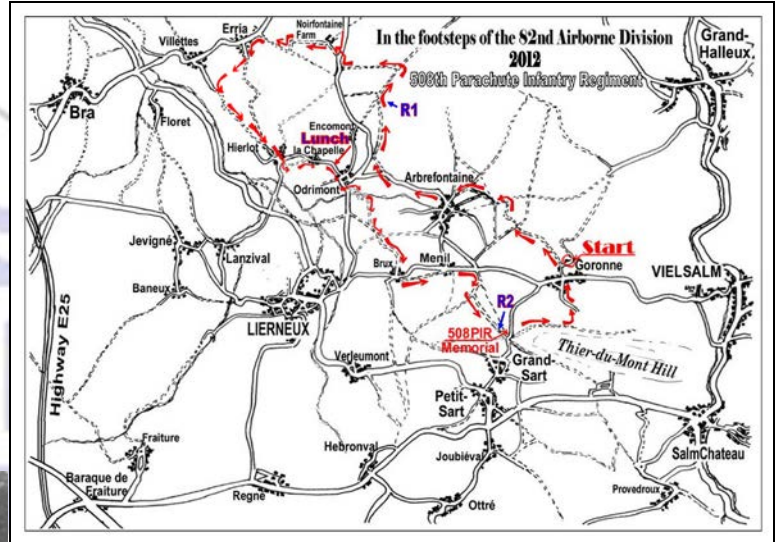


Submissions, continued

And near the end of the march we also crossed the villages of Brux and Menil retaken by the 325 around January 6. When the 508 retook the Their-du-Mont hill on Jan. 7 at the same time the 325 was retaking the other hill of Their-dol-Preu just west of Their-du-Mont hill.

The actions of the 82nd Airborne units in the Bulges were so intermixed that following an itinerary of one unit you also are passing through parts of the steps of others units. For example this time we also crossed the steps of the 505PIR in the area of Goronne and Arbrefontaine.

Emile Lacroix



Map of the route taken by the 2012 March.



Black and white pictures now and then in the woods between Les Villettes and Hierlot on January, 1945 and February 25, 2012 during the March. The top photo is of the 325th preparing to attack Hierlot on January 3, 1945. The only difference one can immediately discern are the wool overcoats worn by many of the 325 men back in 1945.

Editor's Note: On behalf of the 325 Association I would like to extend our congratulations to Emile for this well-deserved reward in recognition of all that he has done to preserve the memory and legacy of the 82nd Airborne during the Battle of the Bulge. Thanks Emile!



Lew Strandberg took Jesse's advice and wrote-down the story of his World War II service. Lew kindly sent it in and I am pleased to share it with you:

**WORLD WAR II
MY LIFE IN THE SERVICE**
By Lew Strandburg

I was inducted into the Service of the United States Army on September 12, 1942. That was the day I reported to Buffalo, New York (near my home town of Jamestown, NY) for my final physical examination and to be sworn in as a Private. Given the choice of proceeding directly to Fort Niagara to begin Basic Training or taking fourteen day furlough, I took the furlough! (Why rush into this thing?!)

Those fourteen days sure went fast and the 26th of September was upon me. Before I realized it, I found myself boarding a train for Fort Niagara with other lucky young men from Local Draft Board 652. We were cheered on by Board Chairman William Hake, the local American Legion Post band, friends, relatives and my fiancée, Barbara Conroy. Off to Niagara and my first "chow line." I remember how awful I thought G.I. chow was eating off a tin tray, but little did I realize I was to see much worse during my three plus years of duty.

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We hope you have a great Spring!

Submissions, continued...

Now that I think about it, that tray of chow was better than most Army chow I saw in any Army camp - with one exception - the "welcome home" steak dinner we were served at Camp Patrick Henry when we returned to good old USA after two and a half years of foreign duty. It was as good as any you would expect at a fine restaurant – at least we all thought so at the time.

Fort Niagara was a gathering point where we waited for our individual assignments. After three days of K.P., I was finally called to be assigned. That was September 29th. Everyone was anxious to be assigned thinking anything was better than Niagara. How little did we know! We were loaded onto a train heading South, but no one knew where we were going nor to what training unit we had been assigned. We spent a day and a night on the train, arriving finally, at Fort Bragg, North Carolina where I discovered I have been assigned to Company 'E' of the 401st Glider Infantry, 101st Airborne Division. The 101st was in the process of moving from Camp Claiborne, Louisiana and we arrived at Bragg before the training cadre. When we reached our assigned regimental area we found empty barracks and only a handful of officers and noncoms to greet us.

Very little equipment had arrived from Claiborne and my first two nights at Bragg I slept on a steel cot with no mattress, no pillow and no blankets. The food situation was also in bad shape. The cook staff had not yet arrived, nor were the kitchens and mess halls set up. To pass the time of day, we had close order drill from 0730 until 1130, chow (what there was of it, usually S.O.S.) then back at it again from 1300 until 1630 with ten minute breaks every hour. "Is this what the Army is all about? Close order drill all day long?" Those were my thoughts. That, however, lasted for only a few days. The rest of the Division arrived within a few days and a regular training schedule was put into practice.

Basic training for the Glider Infantry was no different than basic training for the regular infantry... close order drills, rifle drills, bayonet practice, grenade throwing, military courtesy, etc., and hikes, hikes and more hikes. The "rookie" training lasted six weeks at which time the regular companies were formed. We were then allowed to wear the 101st Airborne insignia (The Screaming Eagle) for the first time. That, supposedly, took us out of the "rookie" class. After basic training came training with the Company, Battalion, Regiment and then Division. I could go into how we captured Koolykonch Mountain daily, but I won't. This went on all winter. In the early spring we began our specialized airborne training. This had to do with working on "mock-ups" of the CG-4A gliders and learning ties and lashes for equipment to be carried into battle. Later, after our

training had progressed satisfactorily, some CG-4As were brought in to Pope Field where we saw our "Flying Box Kites" for the first time in all their glory. At Pope we practiced loading and lashing equipment, then personnel loading and unloading the CG-4a.

In May of '43 the Division moved temporarily to Maxton Airbase where we had our first glider ride. On the first day we had two casualties when one glider broke loose and made a crash landing on a plowed field. One casualty was our BAR man, the only one seriously injured. For a time it was feared his right leg would be crippled. However, after a few months in the hospital he recovered and was able to rejoin the Company none the worse for his experience. We spent three weeks at Maxton doing nothing but specialized glider training before returning to Fort Bragg.

In June the Division was ordered to Tennessee for Army maneuvers which lasted for better than a month. Although we were living in the "rough" it was a rather enjoyable experience. I'm sure no one will forget the patrols we sent out in quest of eggs from neighboring farmers. Fried eggs for breakfast were a real treat from canned "C" rations.

We returned to Fort Bragg in early August and were informed upon arrival that the Division was on alert to go overseas. The entire month of August was spent in preparation for the move. Toward the end of the month we loaded troop trains headed for Camp Shanks, the New York Port of Embarkation. At Shanks there was more preparation, inspections and final physical examinations. At midnight, September 14th we left camp and boarded HMS Strathnaver. That was an unforgettable night! We lined up on the Company street at about 2330, were assigned a shipping number (mine was 13/13) and moved silently under cover of darkness to the awaiting train. We were informed that it would be a short train ride, so in order to speed up loading and unloading we were told to keep our full field packs on and carry our one allowed barracks bag. The train took us to the Jersey side of the Hudson River where ferry boats were already there waiting to take us across to the embarkation pier. We saw no one and on one saw us. The pier was deserted except for a few Red Cross ladies who handed us a cup of coffee and a doughnut as we walked up the gang plank.

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Editor's Note: In our next issue we'll continue Lew's story. So please keep sending in those submissions and as always - THANKS FOR READING!

Keep in touch in 2012 – through the Tow Line!!

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The American War Cemetery, Omaha Beach

