

# ❖ WWII MUSINGS ❖

Volume 8 Issue 4

John D. Bowen, Editor

Jul/Aug 2000

## FINE ARTS APPROVES WWII MEMORIAL

It is another step closer in the final approval of the WWII Memorial to be located at 17th Street NW and the Mall, between the Washington and Lincoln Memorials. The WWII Memorial will encompass the Rainbow Pool and be at the east end of the Reflecting Pool. The Commission of Fine Arts, unanimously approved the final architectural design and location at a public hearing held on Thursday, 20 July 2000, in our Nation's Capital.

The WWII Memorial will honor you and the 16 million Americans who served in uniform during WWII, the more than 4000,000 who died, and the millions who supported the war effort from home. As of the end of June 2000, \$92 million of the \$100 needed to design, build, maintain and dedicate the memorial had been raised.

Only one more approval is needed before the ground breaking which is scheduled for Veteran's Day, 11 Nov 2000. Approval will be sought from the National Capital Planning Commission in September.

## US Military Korean War Casualty/MIA/POW Statistics

<b>Battle Dead*</b> .....	<b>33,665</b>
(*Includes 4,735 findings of presumptive death under the Missing Persons Act)	
<b>Killed in Action</b> .....	<b>23,898</b>
<b>Died of Wounds</b> .....	<b>2,536</b>
<b>Died While Missing (MIA)</b> ....	<b>4,793</b>
<b>Died While Captured (POW)</b> ..	<b>2,438</b>
<b>Non-Battle Deaths</b> .....	<b>3,275</b>
<b>Total Deaths in theater</b> .....	<b>36,940</b>
<b>Died Elsewhere (Worldwide)</b> .....	<b>17,320</b>
<b>Wounded (# of Personnel)</b> .....	<b>92,134</b>
<b>Wounded (# of Incidences*)</b> .....	<b>103,284</b>
(*Includes individual personnel wounded multiple times)	
<b>MIA (Bodies not recovered/identified)</b> .....	<b>8,176</b>
<b>Prisoner of War</b> .....	<b>2,045</b>
<b>Killed in Action</b> .....	<b>1,794</b>
<b>Missing in Action</b> .....	<b>4,245</b>
<b>Non-Battle</b> .....	<b>92</b>
<b>MIAs Returned to US Military Control</b> .....	<b>715</b>
<b>POWs Returned to Military Control</b> .....	<b>4,418</b>
<b>POWs Who Refused Repatriation</b> .....	<b>21</b>
<b>No. Who Served worldwide during Korean War</b> ...	<b>5,720,000</b>
<b>No. Who Served in Korean Theater</b> .....	<b>1,789,000</b>

Source: Office of Secretary Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports (WHS/DIOR) Defense Prisoners of War/Missing in Action Office (DPMO). Data Released 10 January 2000. As published in The Graybeards, Vincent A Krepps, Editor

## EDITOR'S CORNER

Enclosed with this issue of the Marcher/Musings are the laminated membership cards for regular members. I have been working on special cards for the Life Members, in color, and those will follow shortly, as soon as I figure out how to get the VBOB emblem in true color from my printer.

JDB

The World War II Memorial is within sight so you must stay healthy and well so that you will be able to be at the formal dedication in three years. The ground breaking will take place on Veteran's Day this year and it looks like all of the money will be there. In spite of all that you have given there is one more hurdle to get over in September and that is approval by the National Capital Planning Commission. Hang in there. It shall be done!.

In the mail I received word from Nick Savko Sr that he has been diagnosed as having non-Hodgins lymphoma in his abdomen and back area and now begins a fight for survival. Nick was with the 90th infantry Division, 359th Infantry, Company G. He has been active in veteran affairs in the Baltimore area and said "wish me luck- Hope my buddies read about it. Please keep him in your prayers. His address is 956 Homberg Ave, Baltimore MD 21221-5213.

André Meurisse sent this to me which he received from "Mom Ruth" (Purveyor) who nurtured him back to health as a seven year old when he was hurt in Belgium.

HUGGING

Hugging is healthy: It helps our bodies immune system, it keeps you healthier, it cures depression, it reduces stress, it induces sleep, it's invigorating, it's rejuvenating, it has no unpleasant side effect and hugging is nothing less than a miracle drug.

Hugging is all natural: it is organic, naturally sweet, no pesticides, no preservatives, no artificial ingredients and 100 percent wholesome.

Hugging is practically perfect: There are no movable parts, no batteries to wear out, no periodic checkups, low energy consumption, high energy yield, inflation-proof, non-fattening, no monthly payments, no insurance requirements, theft-proof, non-taxable, non-polluting and, of course, fully returnable.

*The following appeared in the Baltimore*

**WWII Musings is published for the enjoyment of WWII Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge. It is based on the research of John D. Bowen, 613 Chichester Ln, Silver Spring MD 20904-3331 in the Unit Records maintained at the National Archives and Records Administration. Proper credit should be given both to the researcher and to the National Archives. Your comments are welcome. E-mail [jdbowen@gateway.net](mailto:jdbowen@gateway.net)**

Sun, 6/9/2000

### VETERANS CEMETERY CLEANUP

: The Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs awarded an emergency contract of \$14,250 yesterday to stop erosion and plant grass at more than 1,000 muddy and deteriorating graves at the State's Garrison Forest Veterans Cemetery in northwest Baltimore County.

Chris Hobbs, assistant secretary in the department, said the winning low bidder for the work was the Brickman Group Limited, a company of architects, contractors and horticulturists that will grade the 4 acres of graves, lay top soil, plant seed and lay straw, starting Monday.

The contract was awarded on orders from Gov Parris N Glendening, who responded to a *Sun* article describing the poor conditions.

*The following was found on the Internet:*

### REBUILDING LOST, DESTROYED, MISSING, NEVER OBTAINED DD-214 MILITARY DISCHARGE DOCUMENTS

If your military records were destroyed in the 1973 fire at the Military Personnel and Records Center in St Louis, there is no other resource to obtain a copy of a lost destroyed or missing DD-214 or its equivalent.

To acquire a new DD-214 you will need to collect certain military documents from any available source to reconstruct a new DD-214 that can be issues by the Military Personnel and Records Center.

To construct a new DD-214 you will need the following:

Copies of Military Orders:

TDY or PCS Orders

Promotion orders

Awards and decoration orders

Travel orders

Special duty orders

Training certificates

Performance Reports/Evaluations

When you have collected copies of the necessary documents mail them to the Reconstruction Branch, Military Personnel and Records Center, 9700 Page Blvd, St Louis MO 63122.

To check to see if your records were burned send a Form 180 to them. You can obtain Form 180's from the Editor at 613 Chichester Lane, Silver Spring MD 20904-3331.. A stamped self-addressed envelope would be helpful.

You should check to see if your records survived and if not you have an obligation to your future descendants to send in copies of records that you may have in your possession before you get those final orders for Post Everlasting..

JDB

## COMBAT INTERVIEWS

### 106th Infantry Division

*The following report was found by the Editor in the Combat Interviews in RG 407, Box 24081, Folder C1-245, 106th Infantry Division, German Counterattack. It is an interview by Major J. F. O'Sullivan of Brigadier General Perrin, Colonel Baker, and Colonel Brook. The actual grammar used in the interview is cited below*

Gens Jones and Perrin arrived at St Vith, 8 Dec. Conference between Gen Jones and Robertson at 1530 8 Dec. Gen Perrin not present at conference. Only two generals at conference, and Gen Perrin not know actually what said. Gen Perrin met Col John Stokes, 2nd Div acting Div CG and Stokes gave orientation on defense maintained by 2nd Div and was Stokes understanding that 106 was to replace 2nd man for man. Gen Perrin not know who or how this method of relief was arrived at. Wanted relief done quickly for 2nd Div on another mission.

Gen Jones remained with Div until 22 Dec. Gen Perrin took over 1900 22 Dec at CP 7 Armored at Vielsalm by command of Gen Ridgway in person. Present were Jones, Ridgway, Hasbrook and Perrin. Prior to Perrin's arrival Ridgway told Hasbrook and Jones that troops in St Vith pocket would be withdrawn from perimeter defense in front of Salmchateau, and 14 hours of darkness in which to do it. When R (Ridgway) left, Hasbrook and P(errin) started to prepare plan to withdraw troops but it was evident that withdrawal would extend into Saturday. Worked out plan which was flexible and changed because CCB 9 Armored and CCA 7 Armored were actively engaged vicinity St Vith. Withdrawal began with displacement of artillery shortly after midnight but troops not across river till after dark 23 Dec. Withdrawal continued during daylight. 592 FA 106 out first. 112 Inf shifted to defensive positions east of bridges through which troops could withdraw. 9 Arm, then 424, then CCB 7 Arm withdraw almost concurrently over center and then CCA 7 Arm (TF Rosebaum), CCR 7 Arm, 1st Bn, 1112 Inf, 2nd and 3rd Bn 112 Inf which were maintaining defensive positions at bridges east of Vielsalm and Salmchateau. Gens H(asbrook) and P(errin) left CP 7 Arm when reported that enemy tanks in Vielsalm and an enemy tank in street as leaving building and fired at half track and two peeps – front of CP. During withdrawal were able to infiltrate small units of 14th Cavalry Groups and odds and ends of Corps unit within pocket. Withdrawal successful and all personnel except a few got across. Very few vehicles left behind in proportion to what there.

In meantime Div CP echelon had moved to Vaux Chevain. Rear at Ferriers. Gen P(errin) remained on other side of bridge till last elements of 112 had crossed and told Gen H(asbrook) that P(errin) going to new Div CP in order to effect reorganization as fast as possible of combat elements of Div, mainly 424 and artillery. P(errin) went to Werbomont to locate new Div CP and met en route by B Gen Buechler who flagged jeep in dark, inquired who was senior officer and informed him that that Corps CP that all available troops be used for roadblocks at Manhay. Told Gen B that as soon as 424 found this would be done. Got there at app 0200 24 Dec and C/S informed him that Gen B had called and asked that P(errin) call B when P(errin) arrived. P(errin) called B by phone and B stated to P(errin) that if Cos not already out not to do so; other arrangements had been made. Arrangements known to units.

\*\*\* Div Staff arrived at Vaux Chevance at 0500 23 Dec. From that location Div Staff supervised and directed movement of Div units after withdrawal over Salm River. Directed combat and service elements to previously designated assembly areas and CP at forward edge of combat elements. During AM 23 Dec C/S received from Gen Perrin to have repres. Meet C/S 7 Arm Div and Corps and 82 A/B at 82 CP at Bra. Col Glatteaver G-4 went and Lt James Willis went, attended conference and received change in ass. Area, calling for assembly of whole 106th Div in area just north or east, west of Werbomont. Col Baker changed previous designated unit areas and got units started to new ass. Area. After talking with Gen P(errin) decided to move CP to new Ass. Area vicinity of Faiveux. And in PM 23 Dec when units moved and moving in did move CP to Faiveux. This was location that Gen P(errin) came to and called Gen B. \*\*\*\*

About 0300 24 Dec Gen Ridgway called with message that he desired all troops be given a message that this was Germans' last gasp (message in journal).

Meanwhile 0330 Corps called for Col James Reid CO 424 to report to Corps relative to getting his regt collected as rapidly as possible for Corps use. Bns called for (See Journal) 7 Arm to furnish transport. 424 alerted.

Gen P(errin) and Col Baker went to Corps Hqrs as result of phone call from Corps C/S in which he told of plan to use 424 Inf. At conference Gen P(errin) reconn. That in view of urgent situation such units of 106 as might be required be attached to 7 Arm, to facilitate defense. Stated that there were no combat elements of 106 available since 424 was to be utilized as indicated by Corps C/S. 592 FA Bn was firing under Corps control and left 591 FA and Service units available. Gen P(errin) and C/S returned to Div CP and Corps C/S called and said that Corps CG had concurred in plan as discussed except that Gen P(errin) to report to 7 Arm about 1900, 24 Dec. From then on was CG 106 and asst Div CO 7 ARM. Col Baker in charge.

Remained at 7 Army until 27 Dec when relieved by phone calls from Corps and directed to return to 106 and proceed to

### DOUGHBOY

An infantryman. The term was exclusively tied to the Infantry in World War I. In WWII the term GI was used by the soldiers themselves.

### PEEP

A small car. The Armored units generally referred to the Jeep as a Peep throughout WWII.

**PRESS CONFERENCE**  
**Secretary of War with**  
**General George S. Patton**  
**14 Jun 1945**

*The following is a continuation of some interesting excerpts from the weekly press conference that was held at 10:30 AM with the Secretary of War and the Press. This transcript was found among the unit records of the Third Army at the National Archives II, College Park MD in Record Group 407.*

**SECRETARY:** Had we had the horse Cavalry there, those two operations would have been successful **Continued from the June issue.**

**SECRETARY:** Would you extemporize a case?

**GENERAL PATTON:**

Yes. In Sicily we had 900 immortal heroes mounted on jackasses and bulls and horses and everything. One of the surprising things was the magnificent ignorance of young America as to animals. Any American can run an automobile – I have never seen one that couldn't – but very few Americans can even saddle a horse.

I was going up a hill and saw a very military soldier riding downhill on a very tall mule, and he had the saddle up on the neck of the thing. He saw me and stopped to salute - he didn't know he could salute while moving. The mule put his head down and the soldier slid off his head. I said, "My goodness, does that happen often?"

He said, "Every time it stops."

I said, "why do you put the saddle there? Why don't you put it on his back?"

He said, "On his back?" He said the only thing he ever rode before was an elephant and he sat on his head. You see, in extemporizing horse Cavalry you have certain difficulties.

**SECRETARY:** Going back to tanks – I hope you haven't finished entirely.

**GENERAL PATTON:**

The question of the tank is the question of the use of tanks. We in America have always believed in using armor in an entity – not as a single tank or single gun, but as a group of tanks and Infantry and Artillery. To do that you must have certain characteristics. You must have a tank that can keep going for a relatively long period of time without having to be rebuilt. You must have a tank that weighs sufficiently little to permit you to transport it by sea and land it in landing crafts. You must have a tank with as low a ground pressure – a tank that will go on bad ground – as it is possible to obtain. I believe that in our light and medium tanks we accomplished that. The score, as I have previously stated, proves it. We got something like 2,300 – odd German tanks of which 890 were Panthers and Tigers.

**SECRETARY:** When you say "we" you mean.....

**GENERAL PATTON:**

The Third Army. I keep forgetting there were others.

In getting that number of German vehicles we lost just half that many – just a little bit less than half. Furthermore, we were always attacking and the majority of our losses – better than 60 percent – were caused by dug-in antitank guns. The majority of German losses in that were caused by our tanks.

Now, as I said before, if you take a Tiger and a Mark

IV and put them 1,500 yards apart and open fire the Tiger will get the Mark IV. If the Mark IV will sit there it ought to be licked. The mark IV is more versatile than the Tiger. It can reverse speed and go around and get the Tiger where he sits down.

When I said "I forget there were other Armies," I don't want to give the impression that I think the Third Army did everything. I am sure that if it hadn't been for the First Army breaking through at St Lo, the Third would never have gotten there, but being a person with a long association with horses I just forgot to mention it.

We have this new tank, this T-24. It is a light tank with a 75 mm gun which is one of the greatest killing machines ever made. It can't take the blow from a Panther or antitank gun, but it can take shell fragmentations and small caliber stuff. It goes like the dickens and can out talk the Tiger or Panther with its cannon. It is a very deadly weapon.

We also have the T-26, which is the new tank with the 90mm. They can exchange punches with anything that was ever built and punch any amount of armor that has ever been put on a tank and do it very easily. Also it has the most lethal personnel shell yet devised. By that I mean the fragmentation of the 90mm shell is non-armor piercing – the HE shell is very lovely from our standpoint, but not from the enemy's.

I think an interesting commentary on the efficiency of American construction is this: When the Western Task Force left here in October for Morocco I asked General Somervell to get me 80 self-propelled antiaircraft, antitank weapons. He produced 80 such vehicles mounted on a half-track. They consisted of one .37 and two .50 caliber machineguns. Seventy-eight of them got to Africa. At midnight on May 8-9, 38 of them were still running. They had fought from Morocco to Tunis, from Gela to all around Sicily and from Normandy to the far southeastern corner of Germany.

That speaks very well for American construction. I know of no other people that could make a vehicle that could do that. Also that battalion accounted for – figures are always odious – but a tremendous number of German planes, over 490, I believe, but I can't be sure of that.

**SECRETARY:** What can you say about cooperation – the importance of cooperation and the actual success of cooperation between your tank forces and the Air Forces?

**GENERAL PATTON:**

In open country – even in closed country, but most markedly in open country – fighter bombers moving ahead of an Army give you an almost unbeatable team because the fighter bomber gets the fellow, the enemy, when he is on the road and the capacity for relatively rapid speed on the part of the Army prevents the enemy from getting off the road. So you really have a very good combination.

We were very fortunate in having with us in the Third Army the 19th Tactical Air force, under Major General O P Weyland and we were just like "that" all the way.

**SECRETARY:** They make a team – fighter bombers and the advance of tanks?

**GENERAL PATTON:** Yes.

I remember one time in the very vicious fighting we had in Lorraine. We had five tanks of a certain armored division

*(Continued on page 5)*

*(Continued from page 4, Press Conference, Sec of War and General Patton)*

fighting about 25 tanks of the Germans'. The shelling was "zero" but we looked bad; it looked like they might push us out. I called General Weyland and asked him if he could do something about it. He said he could get his fighter bombers up. He didn't know whether he could get them down or not but he could get them up. He put in two squadrons, flying about eight feet above the ground – probably that is a lie but that is what they say; like a bullet that nearly missed you, it always comes closer. They got up. They skip-bombed into these Germans, then turned and strafed them up the road. That was a quick thing.

Another time – I am just trying to show the cooperation – a B-26 came down behind the German lines, but where we could see it. It was up in what we call the "Triangle," between the Moselle and the Saar. An artillery cub plane was flying around. He landed beside the B-26 and picked up the co-pilot and brought him in while being fired at. Then he went back to artillery and called a task force of cubs which consisted of six cubs each, with the Thompson submachinegun. They proposed to land near the B-26 and pick up the rest of the crew, but when they got there the Germans had put a box barrage around the plane and it didn't work. That shows what happens.

Another time a P-47 crashed out in front of one of our divisions – it was the 6th Armored. The squadron leader called on the radio, "One of our planes is down," giving the coordinates, "The pilot is still alive, can't you get him for us?" A platoon of the 6th Armored went out and got him. That shows very friendly cooperation.

Speaking of the cub plane, when we crossed the Rhine, we were going to put on the greatest airborne operation in history, but we didn't have to. We had 250 cub planes squatting behind Oppenheim. We figured we could have taken 250 cub planes across the river in 15 minutes, land them all and then come back. Fortunately we didn't have to do it. I always wished we had because it would have been quite an airborne operation.

**SECRETARY:** How did you cross the Rhine, if you are willing to tell?

**GENERAL PATTON:**

We had been thinking about that for a long time. The Rhine was a big boogey-man. It wasn't nearly as bad as some of the other rivers we crossed but everybody thought it was because the Germans sang so much about it. So we thought and were convinced the Germans would think we would have to make a build-up. Obviously, the thing to do was not to make a build-up. When we crossed the Moselle just west of Coblenz we started upstream in the southerly direction – for some reason, in my mind streams should always flow south, but they don't – parallel to the River.

We had five divisions – the 90th, 5th, 4th and 6th Armored and the 76th, I think. It is immaterial. There were three infantry and two armored.

We were pushing down the Rhine and the Germans were watching ahead because we were heading for Worms and those places. When we got past Oppenheim during the night, we turned two divisions off to the left and the Germans never saw them, but fortunately at Oppenheim there was – of course, it wasn't fortunate we picked it because we had pictures – a barge

harbor covered with high trees and the far side of the river behind Oppenheim was hillish.

We brought our boats down, launched them in the barge harbor, loaded them with men and routed them around the end of the peninsula and went across.

My aide, major Stiller, who rode in on the first boat, said the only thing he missed on the moonlight ride was a pretty girl. We actually got the first boats ashore before they opened fire. It was a complete surprise.

Credit should go to Major General Manton S Eddy, Commanding General of the 12th Corps; Major General Ernest M Harmon, Commanding General of the 1st Armored Division and Major General Herbert L Earnest, Commanding general of the 5th and 90th Divisions.

**SECRETARY:** General Bradley, here, I think last week, said one of the crossings of the Rhine was made with the loss of 27 men.

**GENERAL PATTON:** That was the one. He made an underestimate, it was 28.

**PRESS:** For two divisions?

**GENERAL PATTON:** No, 28 men in the 5th Division, which was the first across. I doubt if the 90th had more, but I don't know the figure.

**SECRETARY:** There is a little question here. Was the place of the Rhine where you crossed historic by any chance?

**GENERAL PATTON:**

Not that particular place, but the 76th Division did cross over at Lorelei Rock and afterward captured Rheingold, which I think is German mythology backwards. And the 20th Division (sic) crossed the scene at the same spot that Labienus did in 52 BC.

**SECRETARY:** I am not sure my press conference friends know.

**GENERAL PATTON:**

He was to Caesar what General Walker was to me. General Walker commanded the 20th Corps that crossed there and Labienus commanded the 10th Legion.

**SECRETARY:** In other words, that was the famous crossing that Caesar made across the Rhine in how many days?

**GENERAL PATTON:**

That was the other one. When we built the bridge at Oppenheim it took nine days, 22 hours and 15 minutes, thereby beating Julius by one day. He didn't get down to minutes in his figure.

**PRESS:** May I ask a question?

**SECRETARY:** If you make it short and snappy.

**PRESS:** Does the designation of the Third Army as occupation force in Germany effect your hopes to go to the Japanese war?

**SECRETARY:** I will rule out that. We are talking about past operations.

**PRESS:** What kind of magic did you use to get the spirits of the Third Army so high? We heard all about that.

**GENERAL PATTON:** I just had the happiness of commanding some very great men and had some very great, great commanders.

**PRESS:** You referred to the plan of crossing the Rhine at Oppenheim with 250 cub planes and you preceded that by planning the greatest airborne operation. Were you being

*(Continued on page 6)*

*(Continued from page 5, Press Conference, Sec of War and general Patton)*  
 cacetious, or ....?

**GENERAL PATTON:** Facetious! I am sorry I have such a pretty wit people don't realize it.

**PRESS:** General Bradley said last week there was a crossing planned by two airborne divisions.....

**GENERAL PATTON:**

Yes, there was at this same place, but that had been planned for days and that was thrown out of kilter by this fellow that attacked us and we had to go up and lick him.

There is one thing that I would like to have you gentlemen and ladies correct for me. I don't know just what has been said but it is alleged I said "a lot of damed fool soldiers got killed," or "a lot of soldiers got killed because they were damned fools" or some such remark as that. The situation is as follows:

I was talking to about 20,000 people in Boston. Sitting in front of me were some 2,300 wounded men of the Third Army and throughout the crowd were a large number of non-wounded men of the Third.

We have the habit of always referring to our heroic dead and wounded. If you say that often enough you get the illusion that men not dead or wounded are not heroic. I was trying to get the fact that these men not wounded or dead were just as great heroes as those who had been killed and wounded. In fact, some men get killed for trivial reasons; I said "foolishly."

To illustrate that: I knew a man in the 9th Division who landed in Africa, fought in every fight in Tunisia, Sicily, clear across France and Germany. He was in every fight and never had his skin broken except when they stuck pins in him sticking decorations on him. A man like that is a hero because he stuck his neck out time after time after time and never had a rest. He was a great friend of mine who commanded a regiment in Sicily. He commanded a regiment at the landing at Normandy. He was a great hero – mark this, a great hero, great front-line fighter but he was killed trivially.

After he became a General he was eating lunch in an old barn 16 miles back of the front and a 240 German shell came through. It was a dud and did not explode. It hit him in the chest and cut him in two.

**SECRETARY:** Just by luck!

**GENERAL PATTON:**

Yes. One of the nearest times I ever came to getting killed was when I was visiting a corps that didn't belong to me. Four shell hit in the immediate vicinity and mathematically I am dead.

If you can get that thing across, what I am trying to say is you don't have to be dead or wounded to be a hero. Some people get killed through error. It takes a certain period of time for any young soldier to develop a technique of avoiding unnecessary risks. We advocate people taking risks, calculated risks we call them, but people leaving their helmets off and lighting cigarettes on the front line at night and things like that either get killed or are awful lucky.

**SECRETARY:**

I think they all understand.

Now I think we will call this off.

**PRESS:** Thank you, Mr. Secretary and General Patton

*(Continued from page 8, Hasselpath, Remembrance Place)*

### 1. German Trench

Type of trench dug by the German forces for the close protection of much larger installation, such as main supply roads, concrete or log bunkers of the Siegfried Line, The approach ways were often protected by concertina wires, booby traps and variety of anti-personnel mines. In the fall of 1944 there were several road blocks on the Hasselpath trail and this trench was part of one of those road block protections.

### 2. Two man foxhole (US)

Frequently nicknamed "foxhole," this type of dugout is common on the front line. Its depth allowed the occupants to fire in standing position and was large enough for them to sleep. The hole could also be covered by logs and dirt for protection against shell splinters.

### 3 "L" shaped trench (US)

"L" shaped trench whose use was to cover the flank of a squad or a platoon. The occupant could fire easily to two different directions. For an unknown reason, several positions of this type were identified in the protected area.

### 4. German Headquarters and CP

Group of German positions dug during the battle for Elsenborn Ridge (989th Regiment 277th Volksgrenadier Div). Each hole has an entry oriented north-east, the combat zone being at the time a few kilometers due west and within artillery range. Like many of the American holes, those ones were also covered by logs and dirt to give the occupants a maximum of protection against the artillery and the extreme winter conditions.

### 5. Squad or Platoon CP Hole

This position was used as a CP (Command Post) and suited to 4 or 5 men and radio equipment. The occupants were sleeping in other holes located in the immediate vicinity.

### 6. Impact hole

Crater formed by the explosion of a medium caliber shell, probably 75mm or 104 mm.

### 7. Aid Station (US)

This large position was dug by US soldiers in October 1944. Two months later, it was used by the 395th regimental Combat Team of the 99th Infantry Division as a regimental aid and collecting station. Note: this important construction has an "L" shaped entry oriented south-west, the front at the time being due east. A number of logs, part of the walls and the roof are still visible.

### 8. Impact hole

Crater formed by the explosion of a large caliber shell probably 155mm or 8 inch.

### 9. Temporary slit trench

This type of trench was used for a short period of time and gave a minimum protection for one man. The depth did not exceed 50 cm (1.5 feet).

## REFLECTIONS by Joseph Zimmer

*These reflections were given by the author at the MD/DC Chapter of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge Association meeting, on Sunday, 11 June 2000, at the Ft Meade Golf ClubHouse. Joe served with Company B, 345th Infantry, 87th Infantry Division. His thoughts are shared with those who were unable to attend.*

A year ago, last Memorial day, I spoke at the dedication of our new monument not far from this clubhouse at Fort Meade. Since then, I have given Reflections a number of additional times for VBOB meetings and remembrances.

We are well into the new 21st Century, by some count, as we bid adieu to the end of the 20th Century. A century wherein, there was not a single day when there were fewer than a score of wars raging somewhere, all of which took over 110 million lives – close to 60 million in World War II alone. (Close to 1200 of every hour of WWII.) At the beginning of the 20th Century, 10% of the casualties of war were civilians. At the end of the 20th Century, 90% were casualties. Of late, 2 million children died in wars in the 90's.

The endless number of memorials, monuments, plaques, all over this planet, to we Americans and Allies who fought, died and survived, far exceed those in our own country. We still await our own National Monument commemoration World War II. In these later years, VBOB has dedicated a large number of memorials to the gallant and victorious men and women who participated in the Battle of the Bulge, in numerous states throughout our beloved land. There is no expiration date on memories. AS Plato said: "The life that is unexamined is not worth living."

All of this can be viewed as a verbal dance between the present and the past. They all fill a place in our heart and memory. When we were young, our faces showed no wear. Now the lines appear to mark our faces with every moment of the fear and anguish we experienced each day of combat; the bitter cold, the pain of our wounds and the loss of our friends and comrades. How very long is the mourners bench upon which we must sit, arms linked in undiluted friendship – all of us, brief links ourselves.

From time to time, we might differ or even argue, write about it, as to how long the battle lasted, what unit was where and what it did or not do, who got what medals, and so on. All of this does a disservice to those less fortunate who were killed, wounded, taken prisoner, and even today, bear the continuing pain and visible scars of their participation and heroism. No matter what the numbers were, we were tens of thousands of breathing puffs in an enormous herd on the winter hills and plains of the Ardennes. Contrast that with when were all young boys and girls, some of whom were going to change the world, and others who were going to own it. There is a thread that runs through our words everytime we meet. A thread who's weave gives us strength, a thread that binds us together. I'm sure in those war years, children, if they had crayons, painted the sky black – night without stars. We made it better by our victory, and made it possible for them to depict the painted sky as blue and the nights full of stars.

In the land we fought in, we witnessed the cold war for forty years (1949-1989), the taking down of the Berlin Wall, the collapse of the Soviet Union (evil empire, as President Reagan coined it), the end of the Warsaw Pact coalition as a buffer against NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) which has served as the umbrella of protection for the western allies for over five decades. Our military forces, intended or unintended, are exerting new roles such as peacekeeping, nation building, and humanitarian. Seemingly, what was once the military's time has now become the diplomat's time. As D H Lawrence said, "Look we've all come through." We know of two World Wars, serving in one of them; and, three others that weren't called that. One was even called a police action in which close to 34,000 of our soldiers perished.

We await the coming political presidential campaign, our first of this century. By our next meeting we surely will know who the nominees are. If the right leadership results, we should age much slower, not fade too quickly, nor be forgotten. As men who fought in a distant place, a long time ago. We six million remaining veterans of WWII, are living out our years mostly to the full. As John Greenleaf Whittier's cornball doggerel stated, "For of all sad words of tongue or pen, the saddest are these, 'It might have been.'" Let us of the *Greatest Generation* not just fade away as old soldiers are sometimes said to do, for we are not inclined to live life lukewarmly. We value personal experience over intellectual theory. While employed in the Office of the President, I had the opportunity to meet both Lech Walesa and Vaclav Havel, Presidents of Poland and Czechoslovakia, respectively. It was one of the memorable experiences for me to meet, shake hands, and speak to them through an interpreter. They both had the look of the hunted in their eyes, as all combat veterans do. Latter day heroes of the Cold War to be sure.

Each of us were our country's best security. Still six million strong, we await the grim reaper, approaching death; when hair falls or changes shade, when skin withers, strength weakens, and the final sparks of fire fade. Angels dance in anticipation; a child is coming home. Before all this however; there is no one more engaging then one who is gracefully aging. Such courage lifts is up TODAY.

## HASSELPATH Remembrance Place

*The following has been received from André R Meurisse of Büllingen Belgium of a new memorial recently dedicated by the Town of Büllingen, Belgium. He writes about the "birth & baptism" of a place of remembrance and meditation, symbol of peace and reconciliation – beyond any frontier, any dugout and any grave." which is in direct relation with the combats fought here during the winter of 1944-1945. This front line site, which was dedicated on 13 May 2000, (still is almost 100 percent as it was then with the exception of the time erosion) was selected for permanent preservation. This small section of the Bulge area (northern shoulder) ground is filled with a mixture of foxholes that will from now on be taken care of just as if they were in a museum. André sent along the dedication program which I will attempt to reproduce the English portion. This site was used by both the Germans and the Americans and is dedicated to both combatants. It will be a must see item on any future visits.*

Souvenir of the official opening from the protected area

### **Remembrance place Hasselpath**

**Place of remembrance and meditation,  
Symbol of peace and reconciliation -  
Beyond any frontier, any dugout and any  
grave.**

In silent memory of the many American and German soldiers, who had to combat and loose their lives in the forests of this area during the Battle of the Bulge in winter 1944-45.

The Town of Büllingen  
Rocherath-Krinkelt, May 13th, 2000

In this wooded region, on the morning of December 16, 1944, the main spearhead of the BATTLE OF THE BULGE was launched. This forest area, as well as the nearby villages of Rocherath and Krinkelt were located in the middle of the historic battle which caused such appalling loss of human life. During the 40 day battle, American and German units, in turn, occupied this specific area. Today, this peaceful timberland, still contains a number of trenches and remains of fortified dugouts – silent vestiges of fierce and heroic combat.

In cooperation with the official authorities of Belgium, the United States of America and the Federal Republic of Germany, as well as with American and German veterans, the town authorities of Büllingen, on March 09, 2000, proclaimed the portion of the forest shown on the map as a protected area.

It will be a place of:

**remembrance and mediation  
a symbol of peace and reconciliation  
beyond any frontier, any dugout and any  
grave.**

The site was dedicated on 13 May 13, 2000, in presence of American and German veterans who belonged to units involved in the battle as well as official representatives of the Belgian, American and German governments.

*Request to the visitors of the protected site:*

*While visiting the site, please remember the events of that battle and the pain and the death of so many young soldiers it has generated. Take the opportunity to think and find a way where you personally could act for a reconciliation between people. Thank you.*

(Continued on page 6)

## Fact Sheet of the 87th Infantry Division

**TYPE OF DIVISION:** Organized Reserve.

**NICKNAME:** "Golden Acorn" Division

**MOTTO:** "Stalwart and Strong" and "Sturdy as an Oak."

**SHOULDER PATCH:** A golden acorn on a circular green background. The acorn was chosen by the division during World War I to signify strength.

**HISTORY:** Activated for World War I on 25 Aug 1917, at Camp Pike, Ark., the division had as its nucleus men drafted from Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi. It provided a number of replacements for units already overseas and these men were subsequently replaced by personnel from New York and New Jersey when the division moved to Camp (now Fort) Dix, New Jersey, in Jun 1918. The 87th went overseas in August and Sep 1918 and was about to be committed to action when the Armistice was signed. The division returned to the United States in Jan 1919 and was demobilized.

**ACTIVATION DATE:** 15 December 1942.

**INACTIVATION DATE:** 20 September 1945 at Fort Benning, Georgia..

**COMPONENT UNITS:** 345th, 346th and 347th Inf Regts; 87th Cav Rcn Tp (Mecz); 312th Engr Combat Bn, 312th Med Bn. Div Arty: 334th, 336th and 912th FA Bns (105 How) and 335th FA Bn (155 How). Sp Tps: 87th QM Co, 87th Sig Co, 787th Ord Co (LM), Hq Co, MP Plat and Band.

**TRAINING UNDER ARMY GROUND FORCES:** Upon activation at Camp McCain, Mississippi, the division was assigned to the III Corps of the Second army. The 87th participated in Second Army maneuvers in Tennessee from 6 December 1943 to 17 January 1944. Following maneuvers the division was transferred to Fort Jackson, South Carolina.

**DEPARTED U.S. FOR FOREIGN DUTY:** 4 November 1944.

**OVERSEAS TRAINING:** The 87th had little chance for overseas training, being moved into the combat area ten days after arriving on the continent.

**DATE ENTERED COMBAT:** DIVISION 13 December 1944.

**COMBAT DAYS (DIV):** 134.

**BATTLE CREDITS:** (Division) Rhineland, Ardennes, and Central Europe.

**RETURNED TO US:** 11 July 1945.

**SUCCESSIVE COMMANDING GENERALS:** Major General Percy W Clarkson from Dec 1942 to Oct 1943; Major General Eugene M Landrum from Oct 1943 to Apr 1944; Major General Frank L Culin, Jr., from Apr 1944 to inactivation.

**DISTINGUISHED UNIT CITATIONS:** 2nd Battalion, 345th Infantry for 5-9 Feb 45 action in Germany; 1st Battalion, 347th Infantry for 25 Mar 45 action at the Rhine River.

**CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR WINNERS:** S/Sgt Curtis F Shoup – Company I, 346th Inf Regt for 7 Jan 1945 action near Tillet, Belgium.

**COMBAT HIGHLIGHTS:** A drive through the Ardennes, crossing the Moselle River and a race through the heart of Nazi Germany to the Czechoslovakian border are among the accomplishments of the 87th Infantry Div. The div went into action on 6 Dec 1944 in the Metz area and two days later accepted the surrender of Fort Driant. On 13 Dec 1944, the 87th shifted to the vicinity of Gros Rederching, near the Saar-German border, captured Rimling, and soon punched into Germany. In mid-December, however, the Germans big offensive was launched, and the 87th was moved to Belg. Late in Dec 1944, the div arrived at Seviscourt and soon went on to sweep up Moiricy, then wheeled east and grabbed Remagne. On New Year's Day 1945, the div captured Jenneville, a vital link of the German defenses along the Moiricy-Houffalize–St Hubert road junction. By 11 Jan 1945, the 87th had driven the remnants of a beaten foe from Bonnerue and Pironpre. In mid-Jan the div was moved to Luxembourg and took up defensive positions along the Luxembourg-German boundary on the Sauer River from Echternach to Wasserbillig. The major action during this period was a river crossing designed to divert the enemy from full scale assault crossings of the Sauer made by three divs on the 87th's left flank. Clearing Germans from Belg and cracking the Siegfried Line followed. In mid-Mar preparations were made for the taking of Coblenz and early in Apr the div crossed the Moselle River and in a lightning move took the city. It was the start of another great Third Army drive into the Rhineland. Late in Mar, the 87th fought its way across the Rhine against heavy opposition. After clearing the east bank of the river two task forces were organized and the 87th raced 45 miles during the last week of Mar. On 7 Apr, the div jumped off for an attack on Tambach. Sporadic resistance was quickly overcome. In the ten days of the drive, the 87th advanced through Thurginia province and into Saxony. Plausen, an industrial city, was taken and Oelsnitz fell to the div the same day. The 87th now moved to the Czech border, six miles southeast of Oelsnitz. The div returned to the US in Jul 1945 (for Pacific duty) and subsequently inactivated.

*These Army Ground Forces Fact Sheets were prepared at the end of the war (1 March 1947) by The Information Section, Analysis Branch, Headquarters Army Ground Forces on each division. They may be found in Record Group 407, Unit Records, for each division, under the file number 3 (Division #) - 0 at the National Archives and Records Administration, 8601 Adelphi Rd, College Park MD.*

## BULGE UNIT REUNIONS

**2-6 Aug 2000 612th Tank Destroyer Bn, The Continental Inn, Lexington KY 40505.** Contact Jack Flanagan, Secretary, 139 St Andrews Rd, Severna Park MD 21146, 410-987-1701.

**23 -26 Aug 2000 31st InfD, Radisson Inn, Colorado Springs North, CO.** Contact Leo Logel, 2060 Fox Run Road, Dayton OH 45459-3416, 937-435-1679.

**26-29 Aug 2000, 84th InfD, Marriot Hotel, Albuquerque NM.** Contact Max Liebers, 142 Pumice Loop NE, Rio Rancho, NM 87124, 505-891-0981

**31 Aug - 4 Sep 2000 National VBOB Reunion, Colorado Springs CO.** Contact: Nancy Monson, PO Box 11129,

Arlington VA 22210-2129, Tel 703-528-4058.

**1-5 Sep 2000, 1st Inf Div Society, Philadelphia PA,** Contact Ed Burke 215-661-1969.

**6-10 Sep 2000, 83rd InfD Assoc., Friar Tuck, Catskill NY.** Contact Pat Di Giammerino, 36 Border Rd, Malden MA 02148-1104, Tel 781-322-2754.

**6-10 Sep 2000, 705th TD Bn, Cocoa Beach Hilton, Cocoa Beach FL.** Contact Frank W Brooks 1674 Univ Pkwy #313, Sarasota FL 34243, 941-355-5527

**6-10 Sep 2000 90th InfD, Adams Mark Hotel, Charlotte NC.** Contact henry C Bernhardt, 315 N Main St, Salisbury NC 28144, 704-637-

14927-

**11 Sep 2000, 106th InfD, Airport Marriot, St Louis MO.** Contact Armed Forces Reunions, Inc, PO Box 11327, Norfolk VA 23517

**10-17 Sep 2000, 87th Inf Div, Fairview Park Hotel, Arlington VA.** Contact Earle Hart, Div Commander, 610-366-9079 or Dorothy Davis, 301-881-0356.

**13-16 Sep 2000, 28th InfD Pennsylvania National Guard Heritage Assn, Fort Indiantown Gap Anville, Hill Top Club.** Contact Raymond P. Perks 215-632-3403

**20-24 Sep 2000, 30th InfD, Adams Mark, Winston Salem NC.** Contact R M Mann, Jr, 2417 Biting Rd,

Winston-Salem NC 27104, 336-724-1472

**20-23 Sep 2000, 78th InfD, The Galt House, Louisville KY.** Contact jack Dillman 513-793-7826.

**20-22 Oct 2000, 167th Signal Photo Co, Houston TX.** Contact Steve Baldwin 281-452-3425.

**15-16 Dec 2000, 56th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge, by BOB Historical Foundation and VBOB, Arlington VA and Arlington Cemetery, VA.** Hotel accommodations at Sheraton Park Hotel, Arlington VA. Contact Ms Dorothy Davis, 301-881-0356.

**The WW II Memorial needs your help to raise the final 10%. Send your check or an additional check to American Battle Monuments Commission, PO Box 96766, Washington DC 20090, before 11/11/2000. Note you are a VBOBer.**

Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, MD/DC

John D. Bowen, Editor

613 Chichester Lane

Silver Spring MD 20904-3331

### MARCHER & WWII MUSINGS

#### *Inside This Issue*

- |         |                                   |
|---------|-----------------------------------|
| Page 2  | <i>President's Corner</i>         |
| Page 3  | <i>WWII Memorial</i>              |
| Page 3  | <i>Korean War Statistics</i>      |
| Page 5  | <i>Combat Interview, 106 InfD</i> |
| Page 6  | <i>Patton Press Conference</i>    |
| Page 10 | <i>Hasselpath</i>                 |
| Page 11 | <i>87th InfD Fact Sheet</i>       |

### NEXT CHAPTER MEETING

**Sunday 13 August 2000**

Ft Meade Golf ClubHouse  
Off of Mapes Road

**Contact Neil immediately!**

# FIRST CLASS