

DIABLI



Voice Of The Family And Friends Of The 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment Association- June 2007 - Vol. 2, Nr. 2

Rock Merritt says, "Come to The Birmingham Reunion" *Association's 1st Regimental Wide Gathering*



From The Jumpmaster

By Dick O'Donnell

I'm continuing to add to the 508th web site as it has proven to be a popular Landing Zone. The site may very be complete since it is history and thus more history gets written every day.

Here are some blank areas in the 508th web site that I'd like to see completed. This is a list of Red Devils KIA in Normandy with no Company listed. I'm asking all vets to review and send me any information that will help make 508th history complete.

Babjak, Andrew
Bateman, James D.
Belmontes, Arthur F.
Benton, Dan R.
Hill, Morton W.
Hyatt, Morris R.
Jahn, Robert F.
Koczan, William
Lancaster, Eugene C.
Layne, Lewis Jr.
McCann, Russel G.
McCoy, Walter J.
McCulley, Wade
McGary, Charles E.
Peterson, Everan J.
Ramesa, Victor
Rotterman, Fred G.
Schwartz, Norbert J.
VanRiper, Hugh Jr.
Winkler, Herbert S.
Woods, Porter F.
Yackulic, John A.
Zervos, Thomas

Thanks -

Dick



Reunion Information

The new "Family & Friends of The 508th PIR has 1300 members and is still growing. We're dedicated to expanding the heritage and strengthening the history of our association's veterans in WWII.

We owe many thanks to Johnny Johnson (HQ 1st) and his bride Joyce. They are acting as host to our first Regimental wide reunion.

Scheduled for August 8th through the 11th our venue will be at the Sheraton Birmingham Hotel. Also, attendees should be aware that there is a hotel shuttle bus that runs on the hour and half hour so car rentals are not necessary if they are flying into Birmingham.

Notables attending the reunion include "Bobby" Feuille and Eddie Polk. Lots of things are on the agenda including optional bus trips to a dinner and the Southern Museum of Flight. The Banquet includes a guest speaker.

Know also that Joyce and Johnny Johnson have been working diligently to secure various "freebies" for the group.

There are quite a few folks still out there that said they were going to attend but we have not as yet received a registration and there is some chance that the hotel will be booked up with other functions etc. Not to mention that we need firm head count for various planning needs.

A letter and detailed registration form are included with this newsletter, both email and snail mail.



From The Crewmember

By Leland Burns - editor

Here's a story that has had little if any Airborne press. When Lt. Dick Alzman jumped into Normandy he landed at the edge of an apple orchard getting stuck in one of the trees near the farm's barn. Then he started struggling with the harness like many troopers did upon landing. High adrenalin, fear, mission urgency where all reason to shed the parachute quickly and the buckles were not friendly. The lieutenant only got one shoulder off before electing to cut his one strap with his knife to lose the assembly, a common jester. Then he went on to join the war.

40 years after the D-day invasion Dick and wife Betty returned. Like many other couples Dick and wife Betty were staying with a French family. When man of the house, Eugene Tirel, asked him, Dick was pleased to recount to his guest about his adventures in those first few days of Normandy.

"Would you like to see your landing site?" The host asked.

"Sure, but I'd never be able to find it." Dick responded.

His French guest had a hunch however and drove Dick to a local farm outside Chef-du-Pont to meet the 47-year-old owner. Once there the farmer was encouraged to share a story he had witnessed 40 years ago.

This farmer retold of hearing all the noise and rushing outside with his little brother. They watched the planes and a trooper who landed next to the barn and fought with his parachute for awhile before taking his knife and

cutting himself out. The trooper then ran to the hedgerow, tried climbing over, fell down, tried again and made it.

"That's right, I did fall down," said Dick who had completely forgotten that part.

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E-mail: Editor@508PIR.org

So the farmer then showed Dick where he had landed although the tree had blown down a few years before. The hedgerow he had climbed was still intact and Dick was thrilled to find the location.

After sharing this information the farmer asked Dick to stay put while he went inside his barn. When he came out he was carrying a vintage WWII parachute harness with one strap cut out.

"I sorry but we used up the silk material for household use." And the farmer gave Dick back his harness.

No apology needed thought Dick. When he left Normandy to return to the states he carried home a rather odd but amazing souvenir.

From newspaper clipping submitted by Betty Alsmann. Leland
***** ➔

MAIL BOX

Dear Troopers,

Just received the DIABLO. I know nothing about it but I'm going to send a check anyway to help out – whatever.

I would love to belong; just keep sending more information and I will join.

Chuck Wilkins, Company E
#404
2445 N. W. Westover Rd.
Portland Ore. 97210
Ph.# 503-228-3690

Thanks Chuck! The DIABLO welcomes all 508ers to sign up although dues are voluntary to any WWII veteran. Ed

Dear Sir:

This is in response to the information sent to you by my son William Blaine Scudder, Jr. I was born on February 7th 1944 and my father was killed in action on Hill 131 in Normandy, France and buried originally in Blossville, France.

To date, I have received most of the medals and awards that he was due including his Bronze Star along with many more. I am sending all of the information concerning his Silver Star including the news release explaining what he did and that a news photographer accompanied them on this mission that he led a group of volunteers to retrieve two officers and two enlisted men that were wounded. I am sending this information along with letters from Sgt. Wayne M. Faxon that had writted to my Aunt Bernice Scudder explaining in great detail what he did and that he knew he was going on a suicide mission. He shook hands with my Father one hour before he was killed to U. S. Senator John McCain.

After numerous request of the National Personnel Records center in St. Louis, only to receive virtually no information from them. I also have his IDPF file. I contacted U.S. Senator John McCain, who was an Air Force jet fighter pilot shot down in North Viet Nam along with a cousin of mine Bobby Lilley that was also an Air Force jet fighter pilot shot don over North Viet Nam and the two were roommates in a POW camp for 5 years. Senator McCain is also the Chairman of The Armed Forces Committee and been instrumental in getting me all of me medals and awards the my Father was due. There are several more that will come in due time.

In addition to having all of his patches and emblems and one of his dog tags, I also have record that my father made and sent it to my Mother. It was postmarked December 24, 1943. This was prior to them boarding the ship to Ireland, I have been unable to play it due to lack of a record player that plays a 78 rpm record. I plan on taking this to a recording studio and having a cd made of it. I also have

three or four scrap books that my mother had saved about their life together. All of this has been in my Father original footlocker that was sent to my Mother from France.

Sincerely,
William Blaine Scudder, Sr.

Readers, see last issue for letter from W.B.S. Jr. Ed

DIABLO

My grandfather's name was Jose G. Cortez he was part of the 508 from 43-45 he was wounded in the Battle of the Bulge in the left arm, just trying to find some info, or if anybody knew him. I was trying to get his medals for my mom, her other sister has them but she could care less, she has his American flag put away in her dresser drawer, just trying to give my mother some comfort. I'm looking to see if anyone knew him. His nickname was corky, another thing he had arm tattoo on his left arm of a black panther.

Thank you, Roland
roland@brennanshouston.com

508th Friends,

I'm afraid my health is giving me a setback and I forced to take a long recovery through the summer while the doctor figures out what is wrong with me. Therefore I will not be able to join you for the 1st Annual 508th Family and Friends Reunion.

The 508th group has always been very good to me and I still have a nice inventory of 508th Bolos, plus Airborne Earrings, Pins, and some western color tips. Nothing over \$20.00 (normally). Call me if I can be of help before the reunion, sorry to miss this one.

S. S. "Bud" Ash Jr.
141 Skyline Dr.
Daly City, CA. 94015
650-992-1983

Dear Family and Friends 508th PIR.

I am French and the webmaster of a site dedicated to D-day.

<http://www.gjuin1944.com>

I added, on my website, a new photo album dedicated to Normandy veterans.

<http://www.6juin1944.com/album/portraits/index.php>

It's made to honor the men who were here in 1944 by displaying their photograph, name and unit. Now I need your help to add more pictures and information about our heroes.

You are a veteran and you fought in Normandy? You have a member of your family, a friend who fought in Normandy? Please contact me to add your wartime photograph and the information on the website. You can email me at patelie@6juin1944.com

Thank you
Patrick Elie
Normandy - France -
<http://www.6juin1944.com>

Your editor had the privilege to be in Normandy for D-Day this year and can attest – the French love their liberators! Please help if you can. Ed

Dues Info

Do Not Send Dues Made Out To DIABLO, or to the editor. The devil in me wants to cash in but there is no account in that name.

Make checks out to "Family and Friends of The 508th PIR Association" and send to:

Ellen Peters
3630 Townsend Dr.
Dallas, TX 75229-3805

The association is incorporated as a 501(c)7 corporation and all donations are tax deductible.

Newsletter Distribution

All Family and Friends on file receive the newsletter regardless of membership status. Postage for each quarterly newsletter edition is approximately \$500 and that doesn't include the cost of printing the items to be mailed. Membership is only \$10.00 per year, donations are welcomed, even encouraged.

Use of e-mail is an effective cost cutting mechanism. The newsletter can be attached in either Microsoft's Word or Adobe's PDF formats – or both.

If you prefer to receive The Diablo via e-mail please drop a line to jumpmaster@508PIR.org.

Hard copies will continue to be delivered to physical addresses as long as they remain active. If you are reading this by way of email – Thank you. ➔

Condolences

Scruggs, Rick J.

This to inform you that my husband Rick J. Scruggs passed away on June 26, 2006. Sorry to wait so long in letting you know. I am living in Idaho now and trying to get addresses changed. Rick was a medic in company D. You do not need to send the Diablo anymore, but thank you so much for it.

Sincerely Jerry Scruggs.
1466 Baldy Ave.
Pocatello, Idaho 83201

Goudy, Bill

Hello everyone. To those of you who do not know, our wonderful 508 friend Bill Goudy passed away on Saturday November 4. A wonderful article was put in the Marietta Times. If you'd like to access the article...

1. Go to www.mariettatimes.com
2. Next on the left of the page is the LOCAL NEWS section. Click on the obituaries section.
3. Next scroll down to Monday November 6, 2006. Bill's name is the third name down.
4. Next click on Bill's name and it will take you to the article.

Bill was a super person and will be missed very much. For sure he was one of the best of the Greatest Generation.

Gene Garren

Staples, Frank

I am sorry to tell you that my father, Frank Staples died May 25th. He had a short illness and died peacefully, which is what he would have chosen. I know that dad has rejoined his buddies and that he is busy stretching and polishing some favorite lies. I have attached an Obituary and an amazing portrait that my brother, Kevin, painted. Thank you for your prayers for my mother. She has lost her partner of nearly 64 year.

Kristine Nymoer

jknymoer@earthlink.net



Frank served his country from 1940 - 1943 at Jefferson Barracks, St. Louis where he was attached to the medics, repairing wheelchairs and as a general handyman. In 1943 Frank volunteered to become a paratrooper. In the ensuing months of intense training and combat he had occasion to question his judgment. On D-Day Frank jumped with his unit and landed in enemy-held territory near Picaerville, where he spent the first two hours alone looking for buddies. He was part of the Shanley's force on Hill 30. Staples was a bazooka man in Normandy. He was part of the unit that took out the bicycle patrol at Baupthe, (he said there were less than a dozen Germans) On July 4, 1944 he fought at Hill 95 where he received a minor shrapnel wound and earned a Purple Heart.

Pfc Staples jumped again in Holland and was trucked into Belgium for the Battle of The Bulge.

Frank never let anyone forget that when a soldier needed 85 points for discharge, he had 105 and was one of the first of his unit released to return home.

Memorial services for Frank were held May 26, 2007 at the First Baptist Church of Grand Marais. A private interment was held with his family present. Cremation services were provided by the Cremation Society of Minnesota.

Searching For ...

All 508th Lieutenants of Valor

Dear Family and Friends,

Not meaning to upset the NCOs and I am certainly not excluding them but I'm looking for examples of valor within the lieutenants ranks of the 508th fighting, the stuff that collects a Bronze or Silver Star. I need not tell most of you that the life expectancy of a platoon leader was pretty short in WWII. I'm always searching for more info in the history books and on-line (thank you Dick O'Donnell) but you can't beat a first hand account or a retelling

from someone who was around at the time. For example Hoyt Goodale earned his Silver Star at Hill 95 but there's little in print about it – yet. Let's change that! Submit anything you like to the DIABLO editor. Humor and human interest from camp life is also good. If you would rather me give you a call then just drop me a post card and we'll have a conversation on my nickel. Let's keep the 508th history growing!

Thanks,
Leland Burns
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Walsh, Victor G.

My Grandfather Victor G. Walsh was killed in the Battle of the Bulge. My grandmother only has one photo of him while they were in Nottingham. If anyone knew him or has any info on him it would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you,
Kevin Klipfel
Events Director

Morro Bay Chamber of
Commerce
kevinklipfel@morrobay.org
(805) 772-4467

PFC Harold Francis Taylor

I'm looking for information that is related to paratrooper Harold Francis Taylor, 508th. He died on 19th Sept. 1944, Market Garden, Wylerbaan at Groesbeek, buried at Margraten, The Netherlands. We found his signed coffee cup.

Paul Geutjes
paulgeutjes@hotmail.com †

Address Change

Rock Merritt

Effective "Immediately" my new e-mail address is as follows:

rock508pir@nc.rr.com

Please make this change to your address book...

Thank you - Rock

1517 Atwick Drive
Fayetteville, NC 28304
Home: (910) 425-5818

Nancy B Yerrall

- is now living in a life care community. Her address is now:

Reeds Landing
807 Wilbraham Rd, Room H00
Springfield, MA 01109 †

Get Well

Francis Lamoureux (G Co) broke his hip in early January and had pins inserted to correct the problem. Unfortunately he has to undergo a second operation on August 1st to have a full hip replacement done.

Cards can be sent to:
Francis M Lamoureux
102 Miller St.
Ludlow, MA 01056-3315 †



The Diablo

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