

DIABLO



The Link for All Veterans, Spouses, Family and Friends of the 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment Association — May, 2014 - Vol. 9, Nr. 1

2014 Reunion

Our 2014 Reunion will take place in Dallas, TX.

The Reunion will take place October 15 - 19. Activities are tentatively scheduled as follows:

October 15 - Registration day, CP will be open

October 16 - Welcoming/Memorial Breakfast to include a short briefing of reunion events. Trip to the George W. Bush Presidential Library.

October 17 - Trip to the Lancaster Airport where the Airborne Heritage Platoon will perform a parachute jump from a WWII C-47. Ride-a-longs will be offered to participants and two lucky veterans will be offered rides in a P-51 Mustang.

October 18 - Banquet †

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Our Duty is to Remember

The rain that turned to snow showers, the biting cold wind that penetrated our thin jackets, and the wet muddy ground we stood on became for me in that moment in time hallowed, honored, sacred ground. It was February 21, 2014 near Medendorf/Lanzerath Belgium. Surrounded by men, who only days before were total strangers, I found comfort, peace and joy. We were standing on the very field where my Father's blood stained the white snow of the Ardennes Forest in the last days of the Battle of the Bulge during WWII.

It was the dream of a young daughter who never knew the love of her daddy to walk where he walked and meet the Belgian people for whom he fought and died. The compassionate men of the 82nd Airborne Division Association, Badger State Chapter (WI), Chairman Frank Morris and with the help of 82nd Veteran, Tom Lancy, made the dream come true. These men just knew I needed to make this trip to the Ardennes area of Eastern Belgium where my father, Pvt. Glenn Herbert Ward, F Co., 508th PIR, 82nd Airborne Division, was KIA January 30, 1945 in the last days of the Battle of the Bulge. They initiated a "Send Judy to Belgium" fund raiser and with help from VFW Post 3143 Rhinelander, WI, Commander James Pederson raised airfare for me to make the trip to Belgium this past February. Our trip coincided with the **"IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE 82ND AIRBORNE DIVISION 32ND ANNUAL**

WALK". The walk, on February 22, 2014, followed the trails of the 504th PIR during WWII through small villages and rural towns of Eastern Belgium at which time were occupied by German troops. Over 1,000 active military and re-enactors made the walk vividly real as it must have been during battle.

This amazing journey to Belgium started on February 15, 2014 when my husband, Bernie, my son Russell and daughter-in-law Binu Durkee and I left Minnesota International Airport for Belgium. It was emotional from the start as this U.S. Airport is adjacent to the National Military Cemetery, Fort Snelling, where my Father is interred in his final resting place. We took off flying over that beautiful cemetery where all too many young men and women are buried. This was a most amazing and memorable trip. The highlight of this trip was meeting the liberated people of Belgium who to this very day honor, respect, and cherish the American serviceman! "We will never forget that they did their duty, now we must do ours and never forget!" These words were spoken by Mathilde Schmetz who along with her husband, Marcel, established and operate an extraordinary "Remember Museum" dedicated to soldiers of the Battle of the Bulge in Thimister-Clermont Belgium. (On line, www.Remembermuseum.com) The museum holds thousands of personal WWII items left by American troops who used the farm buildings for shelter. This museum in Belgium should be a stopping point for anyone interested in WWII history.

On Friday, Feb 21 we stood as a family of a fallen American soldier along with men and women who understood our years of grief. As we honored Pvt. Glenn Ward with flags, songs, flowers and tears we remembered all the fallen who now lie in marked and unmarked graves around the world. We must never forget their sacrifice or the families who have to go on without them. Pray for lasting peace and comfort for those who will always carry the marks of war, terrorism and oppression. We stood together in this farm field surrounded by the thick Ardennes forests and our Belgian hosts declared this to be forever called, "Glenn's Field".

I conclude this message of remembrance with portions of a letter sent from Erik Van der Hoeven of The Netherlands after we returned. Erik, along with others of the C-47 Club, Salm River Chapter, was very instrumental in planning many of the meaningful events of our trip.

"There is no better proof of the contribution the Great Generation, with Glenn as a prominent member of it, made to make this planet into a better world than the ceremony we have had in Glenn's field in Lanzerath. Being there together 69 years after the events of that fateful January 30, 1945 was

for all of us a most intense and intimate moment. In a small corner of German speaking Belgium, with our group covering more than three nationalities, more than four languages and including people from at least three continents and three generations, all gathered there on the occasion of Judy's visit to what we - from now on - will call Glenn's Field."

In Their Memory and with the hopes and prayers that all of you will find the peace and closure you long for for all these many years. Our God is good - All the time, and knows our hurts that seem never to heal. Trust that someday all will be united again and those tears will stop flowing. He promised!

All of you are in my heart, always.

Judith Durkee Peter, AWON (American WWII Orphan's Network)
3552 Highway C
Rhinelander, WI 54501
dtowers@frontiernet.net †

Bronze Star Medal Awarded 69 Years Later

On November 1, 2013 Pvt. Max Myers was awarded the Bronze Star Medal posthumously at a ceremony at the 82nd Airborne Museum at Ft. Bragg, NC.

Pvt. Myers was a medic with the Medical Detachment of the 508th PIR and was killed in action on October 7, 1944 during Operation Market Garden in the Netherlands. He was awarded the Purple Heart on January 2, 1945 and the Combat Medical Badge on July 21, 1945. He was initially buried in Molenhoek Cemetery, but at his family's request his remains were eventually sent home where he was buried in Green Park Cemetery in Portland, IN on January 29, 1949.

It was due to the efforts of Family and Friends member, Ron Myers, nephew of Max Myers that the award came into being. At the time his uncle's remains were repatriated home, the family was given a flag, the Purple Heart and little paperwork. Years later when the family's next generation received conflicting accounts of their uncle's death, Ron decided to delve deeper into the story. Ron learned that his uncle was deserving of the Bronze Star Medal and was determined to see it awarded to him. He was stonewalled in his early attempts due in part to his uncle's military records being destroyed in a fire at a national archive in St. Louis in the 1970's. He found a friendly ear at Ft. Bragg where the 82nd Airborne told him they would "take care of our own".

The Bronze Star medal was presented to Ron by M.G. John W. Nicholson of the 82nd Airborne Division. Col. Tom Watson, commander of the 4th Brigade Combat Team, was also present during the ceremony.

“Sixty-nine years ago, the 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment and other units of the 82nd Airborne Division were still engaged in Operation Market Garden. Given the complexity and hazards of the airborne operation and follow-on offensive and defensive actions, many acts of heroism went unrecorded. Today, we are honored to welcome the family of Pvt. Myers to recognize his actions that represents the courage and audacity of his fellow paratroopers,” Watson stated.



M.G. John W. Nicholson presenting Bronze Star medal to Ron Myers. †

Congratulations

George Shenkle

On February 11 George Shenkle was honored by receiving the French Legion d'Honneur medal by President Francois Hollande of France. This award was established by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1802 and is the highest decoration in France.

George's day began with a ceremony at the White House where he met President Barak Obama and shook his hand.

Later in the day, the medal was pinned on George by President Hollande at a ceremony at Ft. Meyers.

Six American veterans were honored that day with George being the only Airborne veteran in attendance. George was escorted by Travis Aldous. †

Final Jumps

Kennedy, Raymond

Our beloved husband, father, grandfather, brother, uncle, friend and former American soldier left this life for his eternal life with Christ on December 26, 2013. Raymond and his young wartime bride, Edna Lee Gayle Kennedy, were married on December 4, 1945 and remained the love of each other's life for 68 years. A native of St. Landry, LA and born on September 10, 1925, Raymond was the eldest of five children.

He served his country during WWII as a paratrooper with the 82nd Airborne – 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment from 1943-1947, during which time he was awarded numerous medals. He retired as a pipefitter from Local 198. He was a man of few words but will long be remembered for his love of Cajun music and his two-step dancing, as well as his pastime of rose and vegetable gardening.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by three sons, two daughters-in-law, two siblings and their spouses, several grand-children, 14 great-grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews.

Condolences may be sent to Edna at: 1128 Sinbad St.; Baker, LA 70714-3949. †

Lamoureux, Francis

Dear Ellen,

I am writing to inform you of the passing of my husband, Francis M. Lamoureux on August 26, 2013.

Francis was a Pathfinder 82nd Abn 508th PIR Co. G. He jumped into Normandy on D-Day, Holland in September of 1944 and was also in the Battle of the Bulge. He received the Purple Heart and Bronze Star. We attended many of the 508 Reunions and enjoyed seeing all of our wonderful friends. The 508 was always uppermost in his mind. He did keep in touch with many of the members. It was his greatest wish to go back to France for the 70th Anniversary of D-Day. I know he will be there in spirit.

I send my thanks to all who gave us so many memories to enjoy over the years.

Hildegarde Lamoureux

Condolences may be sent to Hildegarde at 50 Benton Dr.; Apt. 219; East Longmeadow, MA 01028-2741. †

Checking In

Ellen,
I'm still alive! I was Regimental Sergeant Major of the 508th in WWII.

Dick Bernhard †

(Editor's Note: So glad to hear you are still with us!)

Dear Ellen,

Put me down for another year. I am now 89 going on 40 so don't know how long I will last! So many of my buddies have left us and of my beloved C Company there are only 4 or 5 of us left.

Love you!

Darrell Glass †

Enclosed dues of \$10.00 for my membership to the 508 PIR. My husband, Francis M. Lamoureux passed away in August. I want to keep up with the news.

Hildegarde F. Lamoureux

(Editor's Note: Hildegarde, widows are not required to pay dues.) †

Dear Ellen,

I'm enclosing this article of the 508 PIR news from our newspaper recently. Father Maternowski trained with our paratroopers at Camp MacCall in NC and jumped with them in Normandy on D-Day. Francis knew him very well and respected him. There may be a few of the 508 paratroopers left who remember him. The church where he was stationed while he was here is just ten miles from where I live. I'm sending this to you just a bit of 508 news.

Hope all is well with you. I'm still trying to get back to normal since Francis passed away. My family keeps me busy.

Best wishes,

Hildegarde

(Editor's Note: A memorial for Father Maternowski will be dedicated in the town of Gutteville on June 4 in Normandy.)

Dear Ellen,

Thank you for the absolutely wonderful reunion in Fayetteville, NC! The experience was one I'll never forget and I thoroughly enjoyed bartending with Gene (Garren), a truly great human being! The time talking with the veterans and meeting soldiers from Ft. Bragg was memorable beyond belief. I am sure that my late father who jumped into Normandy and Holland and suffered 4 1/2 months as a POW in Poland knew many of the people I met. Thank you so much and I hope to visit Dallas next year for the reunion!

Pat Luther

(Editor's Note: I wholeheartedly concur on your assessment of Gene. I had nothing to do with the reunion other than collect the registration forms. It was all Lou Gutierrez and Rock Merritt and I agree – they did a fantastic job.) †

To Whom It May Concern:

Enclosed is a check for my annual dues. I enjoy reading “The Diablo” and wish I could travel to the reunions, but since I am 91, I do not travel as much due to health issues. You are doing a great job.

Best wishes,

Helen Nordwall

(Widow of Stan Nordwall) †

Searching for.....

Col. Tom Watson, Commanding Officer of 4th Brigade is requesting our assistance with a special request from the White House Office of Public Engagement. The White House email reads:

“Sir,

We are in the planning stages for D-day celebrations and are trying to find surviving 82nd veterans who took part in the Normandy invasion. In addition, we are also looking for recent 82nd Afghanistan

veterans who may be related to one of these veterans.

I know this really narrows down your search so while it is preferred, if the search criteria is too specific, please send names of surviving 1 x WWII vet (took part in Normandy) and 1 x recent Afghan vet.. It will be helpful if there was some kind of connection between the two selected representatives (such as familial ties, same unit, etc).

Again, we are only in the planning stages and these candidates will be considered for participation. If they are selected, we will notify you of further details.

Yoon "Yoonie" Dunham
Captain, U.S. Army
Assistant to the Director White House Office of Public Engagement
Veterans, Wounded Warriors, and Military Families Outreach

Hi Ellen,

Do you happen to know if there are any members of the families of Thomas Shanley or Otho Holmes in the 508th PIR Assoc. or that you are in contact with?

I am also looking for family members or anyone connected to Lt. Barry Albright. Seems he was a pretty good Officer, and is commended for calling in an Artillery barrage on the Germans attacking Hill 30. I cannot find a picture of him anywhere, nor any personal info.

I would also like to put forward a request for anyone who has anything they're willing to share on members of the 2nd Btn (photos, testimony, etc.). It is all for my project to chronicle the combat history of the 2nd Battalion.

Adam Berry
aberry@initsys.co.uk

(Editor's Note: Adam has completed his first book on George Shenke and will be selling it in Normandy. It is also available on www.amazon.com. He is presently working on his second book on 2/508th)

Dear Veterans and their families,

I am an amateur historian living in The East Midlands currently undertaking a research project on the 82nd Airborne Division who were based here during WWII; especially the 508th who were based in Wollaton Park Nottingham during 1944.

I am trying to collect as much information as possible and I would welcome any pictures, stories, or recollections in order to build a picture of their/your stay in Nottingham. Sadly for many, Wollaton was the last place they called home before heading overseas to combat and my aim is to keep the memory of that great generation alive.

Thank you in advance for any information you can pass on.

Kind regards,
Darren Bond

2 Chelsea Close
Glen Parva, Leicester
LE2 9UN
U.K.

Drwbond1984@hotmail.co.uk

Dear Friends,

I am looking for information on the following named troopers from F Co. Their names are:

Glenn Bell
Emerson R. Riordan
Robert L. Seale
Calvin Watts

Are they still alive, do you perhaps know their e-mail/postal address or that of next of kin.

Looking for information what they did in Nijmegen in September – November, 1944. There is a picture of these men visiting the Nijmegen power plant at the location where the 504th made the river crossing.

Neither F Company nor the other units in the 508th had "official" positions near the power plant, but I may be wrong.

Thank you,

Jan Bos
Nijmegen, Holland
Circle82@gmail.com

Ellen,

I am the nephew of Charles S. Teller, Army service number 1408403. He was an original member of C Co, 1/508th, dating back to early 1943. He jumped into Normandy very early morning, June 6th, 1944. He was reported KIA on June 7, 1944. I was just hoping for a unit photograph or perhaps a stick photograph of his jumping group. I was able to find his portrait photo, but not a group photo.

Thank you,

Scott Cadwell
San Diego
Stc1954@cox.net

Dear 508th Veterans,

When you were at Wollaton Park during the war, were you aware of any Guard Patrols outside of the camp perimeter patrolling the surrounding woodland, park and wall areas in the Park surroundings?

Thank you,

Graham Lawson
thedudeinnottz@gmail.com

Dear Diablo,

Does anybody know Max Myers?

Ron Myers is trying to contact anyone who may have known his uncle, Pvt. Max Myers, who was with the medical detachment of the 508th. He was at Camp Blanding with the 508th from October 1942 to March 1943. He was with the 2nd Battalion of the 508th at Ft. Benning when they received their jump wings. He was then with the medical

detachment under Major David Thomas at Camp Mackall. He was KIA at Nijmegen 7 October 1944 during Operation Market Garden.

Ron Myers
910-867-1791

Myerslr72@hotmail.com

Mailbox

Dear Friends,

On June 8th, 2014, the AVA (Friends of American Veterans) will unveil a new unique monument on the church square of Sainte-Mère-Eglise. This monument pays tribute to the valiant Allied paratroopers of JUNE 1944 who with their blood redeemed our freedoms.

The monument will stand 2 meters high and will be made of light grey granite. With appropriate unit insignias annotated with the number of those killed in action (KIA), we will honor the following units:

United States of America: 82d and 101st Airborne Divisions.

Great Britain: 6th Airborne Division

Canada: 1st Parachute Battalion

SAS Brigade: British, Belgian and Free-French paratroopers

We are grateful to Colonel (Ret) Keith NIGHTINGALE for proposing this monument. To our knowledge, this monument will be the only one of its kind in France.

The cost is approximately \$25,000 USD. As we do not have access to public funding from any government, we are dependent upon private donations to meet this cost.

We hope that you will be able to help us in some way to honor the memory of the men who sacrificed their today for our tomorrows.

All donor names will be listed on our Association web site and engraved on the base of the monument for the most generous private or corporate gifts.

Whatever you can afford for this good and great cause, the AVA wishes to thank you in advance.

Sincerely,

Maurice Renaud, President

Payment:

Via PayPal to AVA Account:
contact@avanormandy.org

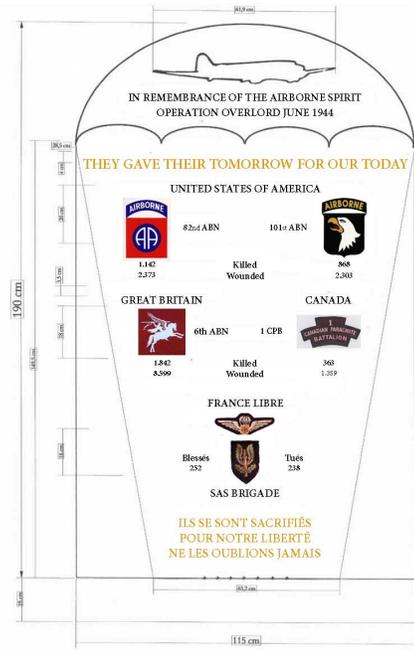
For those who wish to benefit from the 501C-3 fiscal deduction, please send a check to our sister association, Operation Democracy in Locust Valley, NY:

Check Payable to: Operation Democracy for AVA Monument

P.O. Box 493

Locust Valley, NY 11560

Be sure and write AVA Monument in the memo line on your check



Close up of shirt logo:



Family and Friends hats are \$20.00 each.



Those interested in purchasing a shirt or hat, kindly contact: **Ellen Peters**

3630 Townsend Dr.
 Dallas, TX 75229-3805
 (214) 632-1360
 treasurer@508pir.org

NOTICES

Call for Dues!

Dues for the new fiscal year of Family and Friends of the 508th PIR Assn. are due November 1.

Dues are \$10.00 per year per household. Multiple years may be paid if desired and donations are gratefully accepted. **Please send dues and donations to:**

F&F508PIR Assn.
 3630 Townsend Dr.
 Dallas, TX 75229-3805

Changes of Address

Please forward change of email addresses and/or postal addresses to:

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 3630 Townsend Dr.;
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 (214) 632-1360



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