

ROBERT (BIG JOSH) ORLOWSKI

Was born on December 9, 1923 in Pittsburgh, Pa. Married Eugenia (Jean) Lipinski on October 10, 1942 at the age of 18.

A few weeks after my 19th birthday I was drafted into the Army. I then applied for entry in September 1943 to the Paratroopers. In October 1943 I parachuted for the first time.

Other battles I participated in were Normandy, Holland, and the Belgium Bulge.

Following weeks of fighting in Holland we were transferred to Sissone, France.

On December 18, 1944 we loaded up our trucks and moved to somewhere in Belgium. On or about December 21, the December snow began to heavily fall. It was very cold and rough as there were no shelters, no winter blankets, clothing or equipment. After a few more days of fighting, it was Christmas. An old buddy of mine from my unit, Joe Andrews reminded me of how I organized a Christmas service and a Celebration of the season.

After another rough 21 months in Sissone, France on February 18, 1945 we returned to camp.

I returned to civilian life on January 2, 1946 joining my wife and saw my daughter Christine for the first time she was 17 months old.

Earned:

Purple Heart Medal

Invasion Arrowhead

Combat Infantry Badge

Three Battle Stars-Normandy, Holland and Belgium.

Parachute Qualification wings.

Presidential Unit Citation.

Belgium Fourragre

France Lanyard of the Royal Netherland Army.

Occupation Medal with Germany Bar.

My wife and I still reside in Shaler Township in Pittsburgh, Pa. We have been married for over sixty years and have one daughter, three grandchildren and two great grandchildren.