

# BLUE RIDGE


The Service Magazine  
Volume 90, Number 361

Spring 2009  
Issue 1



80TH DIVISION MONUMENTS: Sacrifice Field, Fort Benning, Georgia (left) and Heritage Trail at the Army Heritage and Education Center, Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

Official Publication of the 80th Division Veterans Association, Inc.  
Deadline for the next issue is JUNE 1, 2009

  
**Eightieth Division  
Veterans Association**

**BLUE RIDGE  
The Service Magazine**

The official quarterly publication by the 80th Division Veterans Association.  
(Incorporated as a not-for-profit organization in the State of Pennsylvania).

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*All communications, including articles, photos, news items for publication, changes of address,  
dues remittances and death notices should be addressed to the Secretary/Editor.*

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Flag Sergeant	
Color Sergeant	
Sergeant-at-Arms	<b>Don Davis (K-319)</b>
Public Affairs Officer	<b>HNC George V. West (C-318)</b>
Division Photographer	<b>Tom Pappas (F-318)</b>

**TRUSTEES**

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3 Year: PNC Felix Cistolo (G-317)

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Robert Moorhead (L-317)

Robert J. Mc Donald (F-319)

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**1 Year**

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Laverne Schock (F-317)

Tom Pappas (F318)

**3 Year**

Jim Pietsch

PNC Russell Sick

PNC Robert Burows

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## GENE O'NEIL COMMANDER

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### SUSTAINING FUND

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If you have sent money in and I have omitted your name please let me know so I may give you credit. Last date I have entered a name 1 March, 2009.

Anzalo, Anthony I.	K-318
Bellflower, Levi H.	H-319
Blatchley, Clifford H.	Hqs-317
Futch Archer H.	G-317
Griesbaum, Edjar J.	B-318
Hart Edward	H-318
Jobe, Frank E.	80th MP
Kasperik, Louis V.	D-305 Med
Kurey, Andrew	Med Det-317
Merrit, Kerry G.	F-319
Metzger, Howard E.	At-317
Morrison, James E.	M-318
Parks, Louis F.	SV-314 FA Bn
Pietsch, Paul J.	AT-318
Velasquez, Albert J.	317-Assoc

The following names were entered under Life Plus Club in the last issue and they should have been in the article Sustaining Fund:

Cistolo, Felix	G-317
McDonald Robert	C-319
McLaren, John General	80th IT Hqs
Moorhead, Robert	L-317
Murrell, Robert	M-318
Myers, Gerald V.	G-317
Relinger, Eric	HQs 3d Bn 317
Schmidt, Max	G-317
Schock, Laverne	F-317

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## MCBRIDE SCHOLARSHIP FUND

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Last date I have entered a name 1 March, 2009.

Brockman, Clarence H. Hqs 317th

National Ladies Auxiliary in memory of Don Davis

Naomi and Clarence Brockman in Memory of Gayle, Bob Murrell's daughter

Descendants of the 80th In memory of Gayle, Bob Murrell's Daughter

National Ladies Auxiliary In memory of Gayle Bob Murrell's Daughter

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### MEMORIAL FUND

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Last date I have entered a name 1 March, 2009.

Anderson, James K. Regimental Headquarters Company 319 Regiment, in memory of his former Buddies, Sgt. Victor J. Hudy, KIA March 1945, Pvt. Delta Richards who he believes made it through the war, and a medic whose name he can only remember as Browne, KIA September 1944. All three having a part in saving his life on separate occasions.

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### LIFE PLUS CLUB 2008-2009

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Last date I have entered a name 1st March, 2009

Baron, Angelo, PNC L-317

In memory of Don Davis - Association Sgt.-at-Arms

Eckrich, John H. C-318

Spangler, Walton, PNC A-319

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*If you have sent in money for any of the above funds and I have omitted your name please let me know so I may give you credit.*

## 313th Field Artillery Battalion

I am very happy to be back writing for the Blue Ridger and I apologize for not having a writeup in the last one. I was told they were no longer taking writeups from the different divisions by someone, and I am sorry I did not check further.

I have been talking and calling many of our members to see how they are doing and so far thank goodness, everyone seems to be doing as well as we can expect for people our age. We all have something that sometimes bothers us, but since it isn't constant, what the heck, we are still here.

Spoke to Audrey Blocker a few times, and the one thing she can't wait to have go away is the winter we have had. I guess we are all tired of the snow and bad weather and by the time you read this is will be march and maybe things will look up by then. Audrey keeps busy with her friends and it is a good way to be.

Had a great talk with lou shirey today, Jan.22. It w as-good talking with him he told me he had a vertebray compound fracture, he had fallen in the bathtub. That a pill was prescribed for him that he takes one a day. He is doing well. He also mentioned that for his birthday 87 he had his family altogether and enjoyed the day very much. Also spoke to ed hargraves the early part of January, he said it was getting cold there. It was so nice hearing from him also, he is doing fine and wanted to be remembered to all him friends.

Another of our group that keeps busy, doing volunteer work is Sophie Ellenberger. She helps serving soup and sandwiches, and bakes cakes and donates them and also walks 2 miles a day. Good for her, walking is good and I also do a great deal of that while volunteering at the local hospital.

Spoke to Warren Burkhart, he said he has had problems with shortness of breath, his son Gene, has been very good to his dad and keeps check on him daily.

I was thrilled to read that the reunion this year will be held in Coraopolis, PA. At the airport there will give me time to visit some of my old frlends there that I grew up wlth and went to school with.

Talked with Paul Burgio and he is doing well. He is busy visiting with his granddaughter, and we discussed the reunion in August in Pittsburgh. And am trying to get him to attend. We shall see.

It's always so nice to speak with Alda Gonzalez, she and Manuel are doing well, and she was in very good spirits, said it was a little cold there which surprised me, I did not know that Texas had any cold weather but they are having it this year. She said to give everyone a hello for them, and how much they miss seeing everyone.

Talked with Dom Abbruzzese, and he is doing well and expects to attend the reunion also. It will be so great to see everyone who is able to attend.

Called Ann Hatcher and she is looking forward to attending the reunion in Pittsburgh. They have also had a lot of snow, which they are not too used to. A few of the numbers I called this month to check on our members, the numbers were either changed or dropped. Please let me know if your number is changed or how I can contact you in the future.

Max Wheelright sounded good, and is doing well, and also hopes to attend the reunion this year.

Robert Sproul keeps in touch with his army friends and checks on H. Zeman who he is very good friends with. I think it is great that old friends keep in touch with each other, I thought I was the only one, but so many people find that is so

important in their lives, and I really don't know what I would do without my old friends. Some of the phone numbers I need are for the Kings, James Lewis, the Prost's, and Phodus.

I received a letter from the reunion group and I am sure most of you have also, asking for a donation for our reunion account. I sent mine in and Jim Phillips suggested that we send a donation from the 313th group. I will do that as soon as I receive the mailing from Jim. While I was finalizing this, I heard from Jim and he suggested I send \$100 of our money to the reunion committee, which I did. Our balance \$397.

Please take care and keep in touch.

Frances Poletti  
28 Arnold Lane  
Rowayton, CT 06853  
203-855-1928

I wish to thank all those who sent cards and inquired of our Daughter Gayle who had cancer and passed away on February 23 at 3:07 A.M. Also thank all of you who attended the viewing and Service for our daughter Gayle. In addition the ones who have sent checks in lieu of flowers. These will join the other donations given at the Funeral Home to the church.

Doris and I will now be selling our home and the one that Gayle purchased and move to an Assisted Living Home near our son who lives in the Eastern part of Pennsylvania.

Bob Murrell

## HELP

**Jesse J. King, Company E 318** would like to hear from anyone from E Company who sailed on the Queen Mary with him. His address: 26 Albany Road Loop 1, Burkesville, KY 42717. Also if anyone has the picture made of the Company before going over seas and has the names please send it to him.

## Company M 318th Post 44

I received a letter from Mrs. Mary Siniard that her husband Jim has Potts Disease, a form of TB, and the doctor has said it could have laid dormant for over fifty years. He had surgery for a bad back and now can't walk.

Sorry I don't have any news as no one writes.

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# TAPS

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## **Correction to last Issue's Taps**

Austin, Samuel M-317  
1955 - 2nd Avenue NW  
Hickory, NC 28601-5763

*Is very much alive. Sorry for the mistake, Editor*

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Bare, Howard J. 12203 Lakewood Blvd Downey, CA 90242-2637 Rptd by Son Jeff	K/L-319 1/15/2009	Kozelski, John J. 70 Vineyard Road Levittown, PA 19057-4205 1/22/2009 Report by Newspaper Obit	G-317
Bomhoft, Harold O. 201-8th Ave. SE Oelwein, IA 50662 Returned mail marked Deceased	317 Chaplin Unknown	Laing, William A. 1205 Ridgewood Drive Highland Park, IL 60035-4025 1/2/2009 Rptd by Daughter	G-319
Buscarini, Fred 11 Oxford Court New Freedom, PA 17349-9680 1/20/2009 Rptd By Angelo Barone	Dv Hqs	Noga, Walter J. 301N. Mill Street St. Clair, PA 17970-1021 2009, Rptd by Angelo Barone	M-319
Chiara, Joseph E. 6551 Oakview Dr. Harrisburg, PA 17112-2927 Return Mail marked Deceased	D-317 Unknown	Moye, Robert L, Capt. 5599 Inverness Drive Newburgh, IN 47630-1981 1/31/2008 Rptd by daughter	E-317
Conner, Richard J. 14 Caswalon Dr. West Chester, PA 19380-4114 Return Mail marked Deceased	HQ-317	Prediera, James 16 W. Perry Street Willard, OH 44890-1603 Rptd by Family	B-319 12/8/2008
Davis, Richard S. Jr. Ellison Bay, WI Return mail marked Deceased	905 FA BN Unknown	Weaver, Luther 65 Brand Acre Drive Mount Laurel, NJ 08054-4708 8/2008 Rptd by Bob McDonald	A-319
Doerflein, Charles J. Mail return marked Deceased Unable to Forward	HQ-905FA Bn		
Dolmovich, Henry L. 1701 State Hill Road #D-5 Wyomissing, PA 19610 Rptd by Wife Mary	Hqs 3d Bn 318 Unknown	Susheraba, John A. 5601 Chilton Lane Erie, PA 16505-1111 Rptd by George West	C-318 2009

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# TAPS

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## Donald L. Davis

**June 18, 1925-December 11, 2008**

Donald Linton Davis, 83, died Thursday, December 11, 2008 in Sioux Falls following a brief illness.

Don was born June 18, 1925 in Fargo, ND and moved to Sioux Falls at a young age. After graduating from Washington High School, he served in the 80th Infantry Division and was subsequently captured in France and interred as a POW in Germany for over 7 months. During his service, he was awarded the Purple Heart, the Bronze Star Medal, and the Combat Infantry Badge. He graduated from USD Law School in 1950. Don married Cara Lee Cornelius on January 27, 1951.

In addition to his wife Cara Lee, Don is survived by a brother-in-law Louis Cornelius, 4 children and their spouses: Dr. John Baillie Davis and wife Stephanie (St. Paul), Dr. Laura Davis Keppen (Sioux Falls), Dr. Diane Davis Davey and spouse David (Orlando), and Dr. Daniel Cornelius Davis (Wichita). He has 6 granddaughters, 5 grandsons, and one great-granddaughter.

Don was preceded in death by his parents Deane and Marjorie, brothers John and Chuck, and sister Alice.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be directed to the Camp Leif Ericson Endowment through the Sioux Falls Area Community Foundation or the Don and Cara Lee Davis medical school scholarship at the USD Foundation.



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Lee S. Anthony, Ph.D., Commander

# A VERY IMPORTANT MESSAGE

This coming Reunion in August 2009, I am resigning the office of Sect/Editor after having held the office for 17+ years.

It has been both a pleasure and a heartbreak for me as I took over from Nick Rakotis and being appointed by Al Latusek the then Commander with a figure of close to 3200 Veterans, as opposed today to approximately 958. I have made many friends while holding office and many of those who have went on the meet the Supreme Commander as well. I have had many stories told me and it was always a sad day when they came though and in reading them. Some of the families I still correspond with and visa versa.

All mail after June 30th 2009 is to be sent to the following address:

80th Division Veterans Association  
Andy Z. Adkins III  
2121 NW 54th Terrace  
Gainesville, FL 32605-3392

Andy has been appointed to the office of Sect/Editor, by the present Commander Eugene O'Neil starting with Wednesday August 26, 2009. I wish him well in his new Office.

PNC Robert T. Murrell

## Change of Address

Do you want the next issue of the Newsletter? Then you had better send your CHANGE OF ADDRESS. I am no longer going to send out the Newsletter to anyone who moved and did not send me their new address. Do you realize it costs the Association money that could be used otherwise? I've catered to you people long enough. I have put out some few thousand dollars since I took over the job. Several of you were sent notices to reimburse the Association and it went unheeded. Some of you must move each time the rent is due and still never sent in a change, at least after this issue I won't be dealing with those who don't know how to mail their new address to the Secretary. A parting shot: I have over the past few years told of the Association being close to non-existence due to the lack of money coming in, you who hold Life Memberships (some excluded) have never responded and couldn't care less if we went under.

*All of the Past National & Honorary  
Commanders are looking forward to seeing  
you at the 90th Annual Reunion in 2009*



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# 80th Infantry Division "Blue Ridge"

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## Organization

<b>RECONNAISSANCE</b>	80th Reconnaissance Troop
<b>80TH DIVISION INFANTRY</b>	317th Infantry Regiment 318th Infantry Regiment 319th Infantry Regiment
<b>80TH DIVISION ARTILLERY</b>	313th field artillery battalion 314th field artillery battalion 315th field artillery battalion 905th field artillery battalion
<b>SPECIAL TROOPS</b>	80th signal company 780th ordnance company 80th quartermaster company 305th engineer battalion 305th medical battalion 80th CIC detachment

## HISTORY

### Origins

Same as the majority of American Divisions, which fought during the Second World War, 80th ID draws its origins from a preceding unit. A 80th ID had been created in August 1917 in Camp Lee. Composed mainly of conscripts from Pennsylvania and Virginia, this division of 23.000 men was sent to France in June 1918.

August 1944 - a soldier of 80th ID advances in Argentan, taking cover from German sniper fire. (c) National CR Basse-Normandie / National Archives USA  
It was committed in three major battles: fighting in Artois, the Somme, then on the Meuse front. During those engagements, its eagerness made it to be classified better division by War Department. It went back to the United States in May 1919 and was demobilised on June 26th of the same year.

80th ID was reborn on July 15th, 1942, in Camp Forrest, Tennessee. It spent nearly two years on training. It took part successively in manoeuvres of Phillips Camp then to those of California desert. Quickly considered being combat-suitable, it was sent to Scotland on July 7th, 1944. After last preparations, it was moved towards the southern coast. It unloaded in Utah Beach on August 2nd.

## **In Normandy**

After gathering in the sector of Saint Jores, 80th ID was declared operational on August 8th. On this date, it received task to descend south in order to stop the German counter-attack, Lüttich. This latter having failed quickly, the 80th arrived too late in the area of Mortain.

Attached successively to 15th then 20th Corps, 80th ID then turned eastwards. Crossing Mayenne, with Evron and Saint-Suzanne as its objective, it seized the latter August 10th. It continued then the envelopment of the German troops towards north with the 2nd Free French division and 90th US ID.

Its mission consisted in seizing Argentan, a task that seemed within reach. However, Bradley had ordered from August 14 a pause in the offensive. When the GI' S of 80th ID set out again with the attack, they ran up against the savage resistance of the 116. German PzD, which had had three days to strengthen its defences. After the failure of August 15/16th attacks, the city underwent the repeated bombardment of aviation and allied artillery. A new attempt launched August 18th also failed. Finally, when 317th regiment penetrated in the city August 20th, it found the city empty, its defenders having had plenty of time to evacuate it.

September 12th, 1944 - 318th Regiment crosses a canal on an improvised bridge, in direction of the Moselle.

While the engagements for Argentan still continued, a detachment of the division had progressed northwards, beyond the city. August 19th, it cut the road Argentan-Trun, driving back the Germans towards the plain the Dives. With the end of the fighting for the Falaise pocket, 80th ID was employed to recover the thousands of German prisoners.

## **In Lorraine**

Once the battle of Normandy finished, 80th ID took part in the race towards the east of the 3rd Army. On the heels of the withdrawing Germans, it crossed the Seine, then the Marne. It liberated Châlons on August 29th, then Commercy on September 1st. The following day, it released Saint-Mihiel, where it had fought 26 years earlier.

On September 4th, 80th ID succeeded in establishing the first bridgehead of the 3rd Army on the east bank of the Moselle, north of Toul. It moved then towards Nancy on the side of 35th ID, but met important German opposition, in the form of several armoured brigades that were thrown in the battle.

September 13th, 1944 - column of German prisoners captured by 317th regiment.

From September 11th, it ran up against the resistance of the 17th SS Pz G-Division. In Pont-à-Mousson, it underwent a strong counter-attack, which obliged it to give up part of the conquered ground. It took a week of engagements to secure the neighbourhoods of Nancy - cities like Dieulouard, Loisy or Atton were bitterly disputed. Added to the supply problems, which disturbed then all the American army, the defence of the line of the Moselle by the forces of Reich froze the front on the Seille River until the beginning of November.

On November 8th, 80th ID attacked in direction of the Saar. It cleaned banks of the Seille, captured Abaucourt, then advanced towards Nied. The seizure of an intact bridge in Han-sur-Nied made it possible to establish a bridgehead then turn the German backs. These operations obliged the Germans to withdraw from Metz, allowing the capture of this city by 5th and 95th ID. November 25th, 80th ID stormed the Maginot line. The capture of several forts the same and the following day - Laudrefang, Kinseling, Einseling and Quatre Vents - opened the road of Saint-Avoid and the Saar. 80th ID managed to progress up to 5 kilometers of Saarbrücken, before being replaced on December 7th.

## **From Ardennes to Bavaria**

February 8th, 1945 - a smoke generator hides the location of the crossing of 317th regiment on Our River.

From December 16th, 80th ID was redeployed against the Siegfried line, with mission to breach it then launch an offensive around Zweibrücken. However, the offensive of the Ardennes started by von Rundstedt modified the American plans: like all the 3rd Army, 80th ID was reoriented north and directed to Luxembourg, with mission to defend the southern flank and cover approaches to the capital of the Grand Duchy.

From December 22nd, the 80th division tackled enemy positions, which it hustled in Ettelbruck. It joined then the 4th AD in its race towards Bastogne - tanks and infantry managed to break the encircling of the city on December 28th. It continued the offensive at the beginning of January, and pushed back the enemy at Goesdorf the 7th, then beyond the rivers Clerf and Wiltz, January 26th.

From February 7th, division penetrated in German territory. It attacked on Our and the Sure, managing to cross this latter in Wallendorf the evening. However, the strong rains and the floods which resulted prevented engineers from building a bridge up to the 12th. Finally, it is only on February 15th that 80th ID managed to definitively overcome the Siegfried line. It progressed then quickly following the 4th AD, crossed Prum, then Kyll rivers on the beginning of March. From March 9th, it was employed to clean this area, while 5th ID took over with the 4th AD.

March 1945 - 80th ID fights in Frankenstein.

During following weeks, 80th ID progressed by the Saar and Palatinat, until Kaiserlautern. It obliques then east to arrive on March 20th on the Rhine, around Ludwigshafen. It crossed the river March 28th, then moved towards the North-east. At the end of one week of engagements, it captured Kassel (April 6th). Advancing always more into the east, it seized Erfurt (April 12th), then Weimar, and then Gera (April 14th).

From April 21st, division was put at rest in the area of Nuremberg as an occupation force. While the war ended, it carried out its last mission. It crossed the Danube in Regensburg, and, on May 1st, accepted the capitulation of the 6. German Army. May 4th, it released Ebensee, a camp of concentration attached to Mauthausen.

After the German capitulation, 80th Infantry Division served briefly as occupation force. It was repatriated in the United States in December 1945 and dissolved immediately after. Since August 1944, 80th ID had fought 239 days. Its losses are 2.614 dead and 10.795 wounded.



## Flags for Luxembourg

On December 16, 2008, American Flags were flown over the U.S. Capitol for the 80th Division Veterans Association, at the request of Senator Mark Udall (R-CO). The date was significant in that it marked the anniversary of the beginning of the Battle of the Bulge. Those flags have now been shipped to Luxembourg, on behalf of the

Association, to be presented to the U.S. Veterans Friends of Luxembourg Committee during the annual week-long celebration in June 2009. A Certificate of Appreciation will also be presented to each recipient of a flag. This project was mentioned briefly in the Winter Issue of the Blue Ridge, and at the suggestion of one man who has been involved with the Friendship Week activities for a number of years, an American Flag that the recipients could display outside their home would be a most appropriate gift for them. It is our hope that all members of our Association will want to contribute to the flag fund. As a unit, we appreciate the respect and gratitude that the folks in Luxembourg have shown for our actions, both as individuals of the 80th Division, and as a Nation, in securing their liberty those many years ago. While the per-member cost for the flags is minimal, we know you will assess a greater value to this small gesture when you forward your contribution. Those of our Comrades who have been personal recipients of the hospitality of the people of Luxembourg should certainly appreciate the efforts that have been made to reciprocate their kindnesses and friendship. Please forward your donation to Secretary Bob Murrell at 630 Pennsylvania Avenue, Oakmont, PA 15139, and mark it "Flag Fund".

There is still time for you to make arrangements to travel with the group for the 2009 celebration in Luxembourg. Virgil Myers (virg2121@yahoo.com) will be happy to provide information and details.

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Secretary*

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Engineer Battalion  
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Hamilton, OH 45015-1740

**Company "H"  
319th Inf. POST #33**

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Commander*

*Irv Robinson,  
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