

# BLUE RIDGE



*Only Moves Forward*

**THE SERVICE MAGAZINE**

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## Former PNC Felix J. Cistolo Dies

**Mr. Felix J. Cistolo, 92 of Ellwood City passed away on Tuesday, February 4, 2014 at 9:00 am.**

MR. CISTOLO WAS BORN in Italy on June 27, 1921 to the late Carmine R. and Elvira Rotolo Cistolo. Felix is a member of the Lincoln High School class of 1941. Following his graduation he briefly worked for the Greyhound Bus Lines in Cleveland, OH. On July 16, 1942 Felix enlisted with the U.S. Army and served with the Company G, 317th Infantry as a rifleman with the rank of Private First Class until his discharge on October 20, 1945. He fought in the Battles of the Bulge, Northern France, Rhineland, Ardennes, and Central Europe. He was awarded two Purple Hearts, the Combat Infantryman's Badge, and four Battle Bronze Stars. He was a proud veteran and belonged to the V.F.W., American Legion, the 80th Division Veterans Association life member and served as their commander from 1974 to 1975, the Disabled American Veterans Lawrence County Chapter 112 and the National D.A.V., Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, past Commander of the Beaver Valley Battle of the Bulge #30, the Military Order of the Purple Heart, and the National Infantry Association. On June 6, 1975 Felix helped unveil a memorial honoring his 80th Division in Heiderscheid, Luxemburg. And, on November 9, 2009 he received the Knight in the Legion of Honor Medal from the French Government. He also served as the Chairman of the Ellwood City Memorial Day Parade for ten years.

Following his service with the Army, Felix worked at the U.S. Steel plant in Ellwood City from 1947 until 1956 as a clerk. He then worked for the United States Postal Service in Ellwood City as a clerk for thirty years.

*continued on page 2*

I AM SO GLAD that Spring is just around the corner (March 20th)!! I have had enough cold, wet, snowy, sleeting weather for this year. I'm sure when we get those 90 degree days that I will be wanting cooler days but for now I am ready for warmer times.

Yesterday it was nearly 70 and today it is in the upper 30's and very windy making it much colder. My grandson has been here cutting up some trees that feel during the storms we have had and he can't get away from the saw dust flying around him. We tried to do some yard work the other day and did get a few things accomplished. I must remind you to be very careful with your yard work and watch out for things that seem to have started crawling around such as spiders and other bugs. It's still too cold for the snakes but I actually had a tick latch on to my leg and had to get it off. So check yourself when you do your outside work.

Last week was the beginning of Lent and the time of year that we remember all the suffering and sacrifices that Jesus Christ gave for all of us. Regardless of your denomination I'm sure that you, like myself, look forward to Easter Week and participating in Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and lastly Easter Sunday, the Day of Resurrection! Take some time from your busy schedules to think back on some of the traditions that you did as a child and later with your families during this time of year. I'm sure you will find a lot of joy in those special times.

By now you should have received your information about the upcoming 95th Reunion to be held August 13-16, 2014 in Hagerstown, MD. I hope that you will be able to join us. Our Reunion Chairperson, Jeff Wignall, has planned a wonderful event and you are promised to have a great time. Make sure that you fill out your registration and send back to him not later than June 30, 2014. Also, even if you are not attending he has requested that you return your form with any updated information such as your address, phone number, etc and a note stating that you are not attending. If you have questions, Jeff can be reached at 1-978-532-0741 or by email at member9219@aol.com.

Please continue to keep me updated with your change of address and phone numbers. Also, if you hear of one of our comrades passing let me know. In addition, when a member does pass away, spouses and other family members may join the Association if they desire to keep their connection with all of us.

Please look at your mailing information on the back of the magazine. If it does not show LIFE or 2014, you are very close to being behind in your dues. The Constitution states that members will be dropped from the mailing if they become three years in arrears with their dues.

GOD bless each of you and remember:

*The 80th "Only Moves Forward"!!*

## Felix J. Cistolo (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Felix is a member of the Holy Redeemer Parish, and the Holy Redeemer Holy Name Society. He served as a money counter, usher, and greeter at the church. He is a member of the Sons of Italy #608 and served as the financial secretary of the club for 32 years.

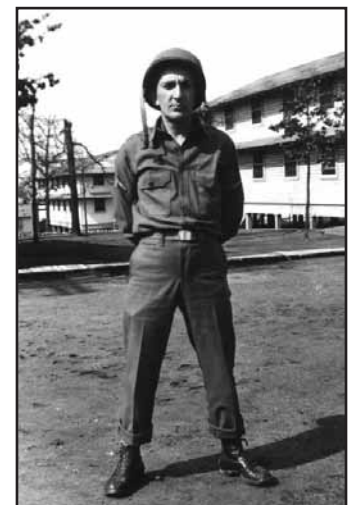
Mr. Cistolo is survived by his two daughters and sons-in-law, Esther (Ken) Shoaf of Franklin Twp., Angela (Tim) Tomko of Wampum, his two sons and daughters-in-law, Robert (Linda) Cistolo of Berea, Ohio, Edward Cistolo and Marie Knapp of Economy Boro, his grandchildren, Michael (Lisa) Cistolo, Joseph (Lisa) Cistolo, Mary Beth Cistolo, Joshua Markvan, Jonathan (Jaya) Markvan, Jennifer Shoaf, Ken (Valarie) Shoaf, Aaron (Kimberly) Nye, Adam Nye, Timothy Tomko, & Sara Tomko, and his great grandchildren, Anthony, Nathan, Brody, Lena, Alexandria, & Katrina Cistolo, Ava Markvan, Kaysen, & Paisley Conner, Brooke Cooper, Anika, & Zane Shoaf, Abigail, Logan, & Mackenzie Nye. He is also survived by his sister, Gilda Santillo of Beaver, and his brother, Fred Cistolo of New Castle.

He was preceded in death by his parents, his wife, Rose M. Squicquero Cistolo whom he married on November 22, 1947 and passed away on July 6, 2008, his two sisters, Elea-

nor Cistolo in infancy, & Lucy McClurg, and his two brothers, Felix Cistolo in infancy, & Albert Cistolo.

Visitation will be held on Friday from 2-4 and 6-9 pm in the Samuel Teolis Funeral Home, Inc.. Members of the Holy Name Society are asked to meet at the funeral home on Friday by 8:20 pm to conduct a service at 8:30 pm.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be held on Saturday at 10:00 am in the Holy Redeemer Church with Father Mark Thomas officiating. Interment will be at the Holy Redeemer Cemetery. Those attending the funeral mass are asked to meet at the funeral home on Saturday by 9:20 am. Members of the Veterans Honor Guard are asked to meet at the church on Saturday by 10:50 am to conduct full military honors.



# COMMANDERS MESSAGE



MG(R) John McLaren, Commander

MEMBERS OF THE 80th Division Veterans Association, spring is upon us. It is a time of rebirth and marveling at the wonders of nature as the land turns green and winter gives way to warmth and sunshine. We are soon going to be getting ready for the 95th reunion! I hope to see everyone in Hagerstown, Maryland in August. My personal thank you to our veterans, family and friends that have contributed a monetary gift to our treasury this year; you have helped our cause beyond measure.

Some of our members will attend Memorial Day ceremonies for the 70th year since the 80th Division Veterans of WWII landed in France. The remembrance ceremonies will highlight the contributions of our 80th Division Veterans from WWI and WWII. Their sacrifice can never be repaid by the citizens of the United States and Europe.

Dr. Anthony and I recently had the honor of visiting with the veterans of the 80th that are preparing to deploy to Afghanistan at Fort Polk. Those that deployed to Iraq understand their concerns as they ready themselves to become advisors to the Afghan National Army. I assured them all that our organization stands ready to help them and their families for the length of their deployment. The task of deployment, as we all know, can be formidable. They are among the one percent of this Nation's population placing themselves in danger to defend our way of life from those whose purpose is to destroy what we have work so long to preserve.

The program to honor those who have served with memorial bricks to be placed at the monuments at Fort Benning, the 80th Headquarters in Richmond, Virginia and at Carlisle Pennsylvania is almost ready to be launched. More information on this program is being readied to be launched. It will provide our veterans, families and friends with an opportunity to honor our veterans and help our organization flourish in the future.

The 80th Division Veterans Association is the premier Veterans organization in the Nation. We remain Army Strong. We are our Nation's Soldiers and remain Soldiers forever having served to protect the values of our constitution and the laws of our land. We are the reason that our current and past members can say, the 80th Division –Only Moves Forward!

## LIFE MEMBERSHIP

COL(R) Will Bynum, HQ 80th TC Eng  
Marlene Dickson, 317 – Annual to Life  
LTC Sandra Forrest, HQ 80th TC  
James Forster, H-317 – Annual to Life  
David Gibson, B-318 – Annual to Life  
Harris Hooper III, L-317 – Annual to Life  
2LT Angie Ison, ILE – Annual to Life  
MSG Edward Kelleher – Annual to Life  
Norman Reifsnyder, HQ #-319 – Annual to Life  
COL(R) William Robertson, HQ, 80th – Annual to Life  
MG(R) Bruce Robinson – Cdr, 80th Div – Annual to Life  
MAJ(R) Gary Schreckengost, 319 - Annual to Life  
Milton TenHave, D-317 – Annual to Life

## NEW MEMBERS

SSG Adrian Cann, 319  
LTC(R) Tim Frymyer, Chemical BN  
SFC(R) Tim Reeves, MP BN  
Marshall, Krebs, 319  
CW4(R) James McGuire, HQ, 80th TC

## DONATIONS

James Anderson:  
In Memory of LT Hoose & SGT Victor Hudy  
Estate of Anthony Anzaldo:  
Gen James McBride Scholarship  
Pat Brown:  
In Memory of CPT Robert Smith  
James Forster:  
In Memory of PFC Richard Forster KIA Jan 21, 1945  
William Golden:  
General Fund  
Vic Muller:  
In Memory of PFC Joseph Muller,  
Brother KIA Feb 26, 1945  
Kenneth Nutting:  
In Memory of Harry Nutting  
Ruth Phillips:  
In Honor of PNC James Phillips  
Fran & David Polett:  
In Memory of Edward Poletti

*The last date entered for Membership & Donations: March 1, 2014*

# A Message from the Senior Vice-Commander



*See You In  
Hagerstown!*



If all goes according to plan you will be receiving your Call to the 2014 Reunion mailing shortly.

The summer edition of the Blue Ridge will arrive in your mailboxes before the reunion, but likely not until after the return date for registrations of June 30, so this will be my last opportunity to provide you with reunion related information in advance.

As I have mentioned elsewhere, this is a milestone year for the 80<sup>th</sup>, the **70th Anniversary** year of the ETO 80th going into action in France - at Argentan in August of 1944. The 75th year would be of greater significance in the way we tend to mark anniversaries in our lives - and it may turn out that way - but the youngest of the Vets by then, I calculate, would be about 93, so, "I'm just sayin'."

As a local Honda dealer up here in frozen New England became famous for saying, "Come on down!"

A couple of things I want to re-mention -

Patron Listings: These are open to anyone, but of particular importance to those attending as they are a big help in connecting names with faces, particularly with so many new faces appearing. Name tags are nice, but awkward with bifocals. Maybe it's just me.

Raffle Tickets: Twelve tickets will be offered this year against the traditional ten. The price of \$2 each remains the same, but the purchase of the sheet for \$20 get you two free! To avoid loss, do not separate the tickets - I'll do it here. Prizes remain at \$250 each, and as many of them as the receipts at 50/50 will allow.

Program Book: As I have mentioned - and will be re-stated in your mailing - this year's book is going to be something more than the usual book. It is intended to be a commemorative keepsake book, and will be of a higher quality for better reproduction of the content I plan to include and which you may wish to contribute to in the way of memorials to individuals or units. This is awkward; I can't for obvious reasons *show it* since it won't exist until all the names and ads are in, and it is appropriate that attendees at the reunion be the first to see it. That means a lot of folks may pass on it and in the end be disappointed. They might get lucky and find one on Ebay eventually, but not at this price! Remember, that's \$6.50 (including mailing), \$5 for additional copies to the same address. (And there has already been a postage increase since I announced the price!)

Contact Information: For anyone *not* planning to attend, please complete the information at the top of the registration form (as requested) and return it to me in order for us to bring our records into the 21st century. Also would like to get snowbird info for anyone that may apply to. - Thank you for that, and if you should decide to take a shot at the drawings by purchasing a few raffle tickets, for that also. Remember, you *do not* have to be present to win!

The Battlefield Tour: These areas are preserved in a natural state. I will pass along the recommendation of the Park Service that you bring along a container of your preferred bug repellent. If in doubt, Deep Woods Off is good; the green can. It will be August and there will be 'skeeters!

Gratuities: - are optional for drivers and guides, but appreciated.

Any questions, phone 978-532-0741, email [member9219@aol.com](mailto:member9219@aol.com)

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Wignall". The signature is written in a cursive style.

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# Only Moving Forward: A Grievance, Aired At Last

by Walter Barthold, 80th Signal Company

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I HAVE ALWAYS, in this column and elsewhere, represented myself as having served as a radio operator in the 80th Infantry Division. That is the truth. Yet it is not the whole truth. I spent months overseas in 1944 in an entirely different capacity. Therein lies the grievance that I now reveal to my readers.

Yes, I was trained as a radio operator before my days with the 80th and joined the radio section of the division signal company at Fort Dix in May, 1944. While the division was in England, preparing to cross the Channel into combat, I was assigned to a four-man team headed by Technician Fourth Grade (T/4) B. We were equipped with a model SCR 193 transmitter and receiver mounted in a three-quarter ton vehicle known as a weapons carrier. We were told that we would have responsibility for radio communication between the 317th Infantry Regiment and "Hercules Forward," the code name for division headquarters.

As a team, we accompanied the division in its landing on Utah Beach on August 2. We remained encamped in Normandy for several days, awaiting a call to active duty. It was during this period of relative inaction that Master Sergeant W., the head non-com of the radio section, informed me that I had been transferred out of the radio section to the Signal Company's headquarters section. By way of explanation he said only, and I remember his exact words, "Those are the orders that came down."

Not so. No orders had "come down." My transfer resulted from the pulling of strings within the radio section. I know beyond doubt who did the pulling and why, but it would serve no purpose today to point a finger or name a name. Suffice it to say that no mention was made of any misconduct or lack of competence on my part.

Having moved to my new unit, I was made part of a small group, reporting to the first sergeant and in charge of what could most accurately be described as odd jobs. They included K.P., guard duty and the digging of a latrine at each of the company's stops during the drive across France. This work, which I saw as demeaning, discouraged and depressed me. I saw myself doomed to spend the war as "a radio operator who never operated a radio."

The new assignment, however, had one favorable aspect. It left me time to fraternize with the French population. I spoke French, and of course civilians everywhere were delighted to find a soldier with whom they could speak. Unhappy as my recollection of that period remains, I treasure to this day the memory of the many friendships, all necessarily brief, that I made along the way that momentous summer.

The ending to my exile came around the middle of November, not long after the 80th launched its offensive through the Maginot Line. Major B., assistant division signal officer,

sent me and one other supernumerary radio operator to detached service with the infantry. I was assigned to the communications section of the first battalion of the 317th. I remained there for something like three weeks. For a good part of the time I served, with a walkie-talkie on my back, as personal radio operator for Captain (later Lieutenant Colonel) James A. Craig, battalion commander.

My stint with the 317th was my first encounter with front-line combat. Captain Craig, the bravest man I have ever known, spent little if any time at the battalion CP. He went to where the trouble was and took his radioman with him. I recall, for example, witnessing first hand the elimination of a German machine gun nest that had a rifle company pinned down in the woods, unable to enter a French village. I also remember undergoing a barrage of shorts from our own artillery, my closest brush with death.

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## From the Historian's Corner

by Lee S. Anthony, PhD, PNC & Historian

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I am continuing to work with interested parties, typically children, grandchildren, or other relatives of deceased veterans regarding the service rendered by their ancestor. This continues to be a very interesting and challenging occupation.

I have had some inquiries regarding possible guides for people who wish to follow the 80th Division trail across Europe. There are 2 possibilities:

Doug Mitchell:

Office: +49 (0) 6555.900.9732

Mobile: +49 (0) 160.517.2665

Rodney Bedford

2 rue des Cordeliers 80560 Maily-Maillet France.

+33 (0) 322.76.2960

jackie@battlefieldsexperiences.co.uk

Our National Commander, MG McLaren and Third Vice Commander, Mr. Bill Black are making great progress on the "memorial brick" project.

Finally, there will be a museum display available to the public, located in the Bedford VA museum on Main Street. The display is entitled "Bedford Boys and the 80th Division." The story of the 80th will be told with artifacts, maps, & pictures. The "grand opening" is scheduled at 1000 on 29 March.

You All come!

## From Generation to Generation, the Legacy Continues... an Event Honoring Holocaust Survivors, Rescuers, Liberators, and their Descendants

Date: Sunday, June 8, 2014

Location: Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY

This event will celebrate the legacies of Holocaust Survivors, Holocaust Rescuers, and WWII Liberators. Participants will include members of these three groups, their children and grandchildren as well as the general public. The program will provide networking and assistance opportunities for Holocaust Survivors from agencies such as SelfHelp and Blue Card.

This event will celebrate living witnesses to the Holocaust and, according to Generations of the Shoah International (GSI, the world's largest Survivor association), is unprecedented for the east coast. Numerous organizations are helping to promote this program, including United States Holocaust Memo-

rial Museum, Association of Holocaust Organizations, Claims Conference, GSI, American Jewish Committee, Hadassah, Museum of Jewish Heritage, Association of Holocaust Survivors from the Former Soviet Union, American Gathering of Jewish Holocaust Survivors and their Descendants, Jewish Community Relations Council, and 3GNY.

Keynote speakers will address the conference audience followed by break-out sessions which will consist of educational presentations, historical films, author and book discussions, eyewitness testimony, special exhibit displays, and pedagogical resources.

In addition to educating the public about the history of the Holocaust, one of the primary goals of this conference is to provide opportunities, services, and friendship to Survivors that are without relatives or resources. Thus, special efforts will be made to bring isolated and indigent Survivors to the event and help them connect with our Holocaust Memorial and Tolerance Center to cultivate relationships and community.

For more information, please contact: Beth E. Lilach  
100 Crescent Beach Road • Glen Cove, NY 11542  
516.571.8040 x 105 • bethlilach@holocaust-nassau.org



## Clarence Brockman, My Dad

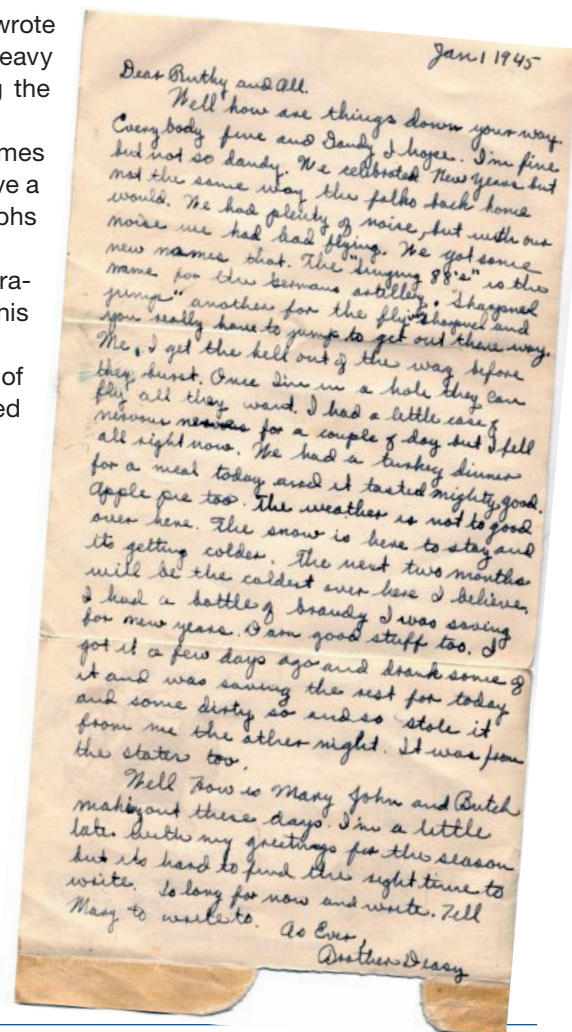
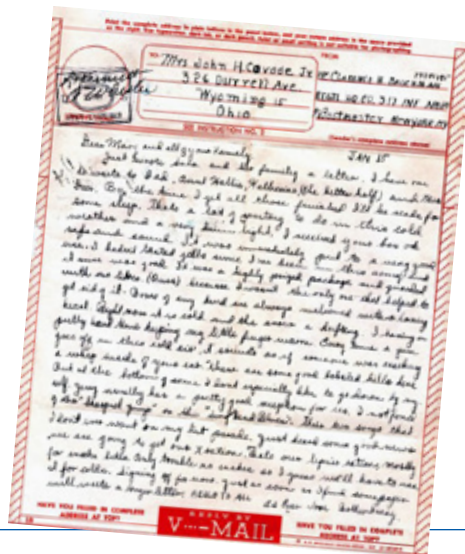
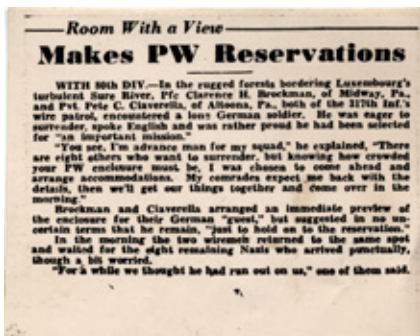
by Barbara Brockman

Jan 3, 1945, 69 years ago plus 1 day, Dad wrote this letter home. The 80th had been in heavy fighting liberating many small towns during the first half of the Battle of the Bulge.

I am so fortunate to still have my Dad & at times he is willing to talk about WWII with me. I have a box of items he sent home, some photographs that he has named for me.

I wish all the children of the Greatest Generation would have been able to finally have this time shares with them.

It was announced yesterday (Jan 1, 2014), of the 16 million who participated in WWII (Allied Forces) only 1 million are alive.



# The Blue Ridge “Monuments Men”

by Bob Harmon, Seattle, WA

February 26 AD 2014

Blue Ridge/80th Division Association

From: Charles R. Harmon (Bob)

Ex 319 IR AT Co & Rgt HQs Co 1944-1945

Recent publicity about George Clooney’s Monuments Men brings back some favorite 1945 memories.

Back December of 1944 into the summer of 1945, I was with a small, special Platoon devised to furnish Anti-Tank Gun (57mms) protection to Regimental Headquarters, stand guard around Rgt, furnish men to Companies in the attack (usually bazooka teams) and run recon and combat patrols in an odd supplement to the regular Intel and Recon Plt in the Regiment’s too. Meaning we were available for odd assignments after May 8 and the War’s end.

The Salt Mine at Alt Aussee has become famous as one of the most important repositories of Art – of all descriptions – acquired by the Nazis and Major Ralph Pearson (318th IR) seems to have been with the first Blue Ridgers at the Mine in May of 1945. His Unit moved on and we of the 319th picked up the (choice!) assignment of guarding the Mine entrances and passages and art.

A local TV Station stationed here in Seattle ran a short comment on the Film – a comment which included some material on my own association with the Mine and Treasures at Alt Aussee. Actually, the mine is a mile or so above the village, and known – I believe – as the Steinberg Mine.

I have, also, given a couple of public lectures on the Mine and the Film and the books by Robert Edsel and Lynn Nicholas. Her *Rape of Europa* is especially skillful, with some good work on the role of the 80th Division at Alt Aussee.

I spoke with Ex-SGT J. K. Anderson (319th, RGTL I & R Plt) recently and we chatted about our mutual adventures in the Wimsbach and Alt Aussee areas and at the Mine itself.

All of which led me to write to you, to ask if there are any other surviving members of either 318 or 319 who were at the Mine. I corresponded briefly with Major Pearson when I first began my own research about the Mine. He was very helpful. I have made several post-War visits to the Mine and exchanged several letters with the folks in charge. I’ve, also, led student tours there...a great experience for me and for them.

If you want some notes from me about the Mine, I will send copies of some of my lecture materials.

## THE MONUMENTS MEN

## THE RAPE OF EUROPA

Alt Aussee, Austria  
May 23, 1945

Dear Folks,

Just a few lines so that the mailman won't come around empty handed. Walked down into the village where Regt. is today, mostly for the exercise. Walked around our private lake and swimming hole; will go in tomorrow if the nice weather holds. I'm getting used to walking into the mine by now that I'm thinking of writing J.L. Lewis for a United Mine Workers Union card. I never cease to marvel at the vast amount of labor which has been poured into that intricate system of caverns by the 25 or more generations of men who have mined the salt under this hill since 1300.

Letter addressed to Pvt Neil L. Harmon  
19022823  
Section H LVA AF Alt Aussee, Austria  
Las Vegas Nevada June 3, 1945

We've got it made up here at this mine; there's only 50 of us and 7 Lt. & everything is strictly informal. We have our own kitchens and a good cook; sleep and live in a big house that used to be for the miners; plenty of room, hot showers, no reveille or retreat or any of that stuff like the rest of the... getting.

Pull two [hours] on and 6 off and can go down to the village where Regt. is in our spare time. Usually take a hike in the hills every day & go down in the valley for a swim in the afternoon.

It's raining again. That's good, as when it doesn't rain, it snows. This is the real Alps, Mts. just like the Rockies at home and plenty wild and rugged. They're still digging the S.S. troops out of here every day. They get hungry and come down to surrender.

Alt Aussee  
June 8, 1945

Dear Family,

No letter today, just this stationery, so, will write a page of it. I guess we're leaving here tomorrow, don't know where we're going. I was in one of the rooms of paintings today, mostly medieval and 15 and 16 century work. Saw some very good Rembrandts & some Italian works. It's worth standing around in there all this time just for a look at some of the stuff that is in there.

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## Luxembourg-American Friendship Week

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Dear Veterans, Families and Friends,

Once again USVFL warmly invites you to Luxembourg for our Luxembourg-American Friendship Week. This year dates are Tuesday June 17th to Tuesday June 24th, 2014. We're working hard on the preparations for another exciting, memorable and historic program for you again this year.

We were all saddened by the sudden death of our great friend and loyal supporter Virgil Myers last year. Shortly before he passed away, Virgil realized he no longer had the strength to continue as USVFL's central contact in the U.S., and asked VBOB's Doris Davis – daughter of a 79th ID veteran and President of the Golden Gate Chapter – if she would be willing to take his place.

Doris has happily agreed to help us, but also has a full time career to manage, so she doesn't have as much time and flexibility as Virgil had. She requests you contact her by e-mail which will help her to keep track of all of her communications. Her email address is [doris@dordavis.com](mailto:doris@dordavis.com)

As in previous years, everyone visiting Luxembourg-American Friendship Week will arrange and pay for his/her own flights, but we've simplified the rest of the process. Instead of connecting flights to Luxembourg airport, you'll fly straight into Paris' Charles de Gaulle (CDG), arriving early Monday, June 16th. There you'll meet with Doris, your Group Leader, and Tour Director Patrick Hinchy, one of the most experienced veteran's tour directors in Europe and a long-time friend of USVFL.

On Tuesday, June 17th, Patrick will guide you on a scenic & historically interesting journey by luxury coach from Paris (CDG) through the American World War I battlefields via Reims – where Germany formally surrendered in 1945 – and past Fort Driant and Metz, delivering you directly to our regular Friendship Week headquarters at the Eurohotel in Gonderange.

If enough people are interested, Doris and Patrick will also provide an optional Normandy pre-tour finishing at Paris (CDG) on Monday, June 16th, just in time for your departure to Luxembourg on Tuesday June 17th. Please e-mail Doris and tell her if you're interested in the pre-tour to Normandy. (If you want to be rested for this trip to Normandy, you might want to arrive a day earlier.) If you have any "special places" you'd like to visit during you're the main tour, we will still do our best to incorporate them if you let us know in advance.

At the end of Friendship Week on Tuesday, June 24th, Patrick will guide you cross-country, tracing the spring '45 American advance from the Bulge to the Rhine via the beautiful Mosel valley. On the Rhine, you'll enjoy a scenic river cruise complete with a farewell meal and wine, on the way to the Frankfurt (FRA) airport Hilton, a four star hotel within easy walking distance from the departure terminals. Doris and Patrick will be on-hand in the morning to make sure everyone departs safely.

Please e-mail Doris if you have any questions or need more information. Doris will also be able to give you the total tour price very soon, as we are finalizing the last booking details right now. The tour will include all hotels, transportation within Europe, and the Friendship Week. WWII Veterans will be offered a discount price. All of this will be explained in the final brochure.

All the members of USVFL are once again looking forward to welcoming back each Veteran – and their family members and friends – as we explore the history of the American armed forces in our grateful nation and personally express our thanks for their service & sacrifice to the great men who helped liberate our country in 1944-1945.

Sincerely, Dan Reiland, President,  
U.S. Veterans Friends Luxembourg

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## Luxembourg Community to Honor 319<sup>TH</sup> Regiment on 70<sup>TH</sup> Anniversary of Battle of the Bulge Liberation

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### Veterans and Family of Veterans Invited to January 18, 2015 Celebration

On January 18, 1945 – just over a month into the Battle of the Bulge - four companies of the 319TH Infantry Regiment (Companies G, I, K and L) were involved in an early morning attack on the village of Nocher, Luxembourg. It would prove to be one of the fiercest battles for any of the 80th Division units. Over 100 80th Division men were killed, wounded or taken prisoner on that day. After a full day of fighting, the Germans were forced to vacate the village and retreat. Nocher was liberated!

The Honorable Norbert Maes, Mayor of the Nocher/Dahl/Goesdorf Commune, along with the Luxembourg-based CEBA organization will be erecting a monument to honor the men of the 319TH Regiment. The monument will include stones from the Blue Ridge states of Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia and will feature an arch which symbolizes a "bridge" between the Blue Ridge Mountains and the Ardennes Forest.

This celebration will take place on Sunday, January 18, 2015 in Nocher. The people of Nocher invites all 80TH Division veterans and family of veterans as their guests of honor

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(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8)

for this celebration. They would especially love to have representatives from Companies G, I, K and L. Special activities are being planned between January 13 - 18, including the visitation of battlefields and existing monuments throughout Luxembourg. It is sure to be a memorable and moving experience for all who attend.

If you are interested in traveling to Luxembourg to be part of this memorial celebration, please contact 3rd Vice Commander Bill Black (Company G, Family) at 404-493-6601, or via email at [williamrblack@gmail.com](mailto:williamrblack@gmail.com).



*Third Vice Commander Bill Black (319 Company G, Family) traveled to Luxembourg in January to meet with representatives to discuss plans for the January 18, 2015 celebration. From left to right is Knut Beuttler, Designer of the 70th Anniversary Memorial; Tom Scholtes, CEBA organization; Norbert Maes, Mayor of Nocher; Bill Black, 3rd Vice Commander 80th Division Veterans Association; and, Erny Kohn, Secretary of CEBA.*



*This is a picture of the arch "bridge" design of the memorial along with the stones from the three Blue Ridge states of Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia.*

## Four Chaplains Day & the Super Bowl

by LTC William Manning, Deputy Command Chaplain HQ, 80th Training Command (TASS)

### ***Brothers and Sisters of the 80th Training Command:***

AS YOU REJOICE or cry over this year's Super Bowl results, I would remind you that there are more important things in life to your existence on planet earth than yesterday's marketing extravaganza. The Super Bowl is of no relevance to what is important about you as a person and your duty to go God and man.

Today is officially Four Chaplains Day, a day that reminds us chaplain types about what our duty entails as exemplified by the lives of four US Army chaplains who drowned in the Atlantic ocean on this day in 1943.

During the early phase of WWII, a troop transport ship, the USAT Dorchester, was fatally targeted by German U-boat-23, resulting in its sinking. My dad recalled its sinking well since he served as a civilian commo officer on such troop ships prior to being drafted into the Army's Signal branch.

The four relatively new chaplains, all first lieutenants, gave their lives to save other civilian and military personnel during the sinking of the ship. They helped other Soldiers board lifeboats and gave up their own life jackets when the supply ran out. The chaplains joined arms, said prayers, and sang hymns as they went down with the ship. They included Reverend George L. Fox (Methodist), Rabbi Alexander D. Goode (Judaism), Father (Rev) John P. Washington (Roman Catholic), and Reverend Clark V. Poling (Reformed Church). Their backgrounds, personalities, and faiths were different, although Goode, Poling and Washington had all served as leaders in the Boy Scouts of America. They met at the Army Chaplains School at Harvard University, where they prepared for assignments in the European theater, and were in route to their new assignments.

In honor of their heroic sacrifice, the chaplains were awarded Purple Hearts and the Distinguished Service Medal. Additionally, Congress generated the "Four Chaplains Medal" in 1960 which was awarded to their next-of-kin post-humorously. The following chapels/churches have installed stained glass panels honoring their service:

U.S. Pentagon United States Pentagon, "A" Ring.

Fort Bliss, Texas, in U.S. Army Sergeant Majors Academy "Four Chaplains Classroom."

Fort Snelling, Minnesota, Chapel of Immortal Chaplains National Cathedral, Washington, D.C, Heroes Chapel Window Post Chapel at West Point.

Memorial Chapel, United States Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

Basilica of the National Shrine of Mary, Queen of the Universe, Orlando, Florida, North American Saints Window.

May their example of selfless service remind us all of the importance of our duty to God and man so that others may benefit from our service. What a great story to reflect on as we approach Valentine's Day and commit ourselves to loving those to whom God has entrusted our care and nurture.

For God and country, Bill

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# Getting ready for a year in Iraq

by John McLaren

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ON 7 FEBRUARY 2014, I had the honor of meeting with Soldiers from the 80th Training Command training for deployment to Afghanistan. The meeting at Fort Polk Louisiana brought back some fond and many painful memories of the 80th Division's deployment to Iraq. I was proud to have had the opportunity to speak to each of them, let them know that the 80th Division Veterans Association was there to lend our support to them and their families, if the need arose during their time overseas.

Almost nine years ago, over 700 Soldiers from the 80th Division were notified they were being mobilized to deploy to Iraq. The War on Terrorism has been fought by many Soldiers in the 80th Division and the 80th Training Command. Many veterans and family members have trouble grasping the deployment of Soldiers in this war; it is strikingly different from wars in the past. Many of the Soldiers deployed have been listed by the Army as Individual Augmentees. Individual Augmentees are nothing new to the Army. The Soldiers tapped act as fillers for other units. The types of units to which these Soldiers are assigned are ad hoc units or existing units needing personnel to meet readiness requirements before going to war. Soldiers in the 80th Training Command today hold many different Military Occupational Specialties, so they are tasked to many different units. At any one time during my tenure as the commander of the 80th Training Command, we had up to 350 Soldiers mobilized in the United States and overseas. The overseas deployments have been to Afghanistan, Iraq, the Horn of Africa, and other locations across the globe, where Soldiers have been needed. They are the next great generation of Americans. They are the less than 1 % of Americans who have fought to keep us free! They are the thin line of hero's who, for over ten years, have been keeping the wolves at bay.

Our pre deployment site survey (PDSS) was the trip to Iraq with about 35 leaders from across the 80th Division in May 2005. That was the trip where we learned that the mission was not what we had anticipated or for which we had a training plan. Our trip had started with the group of 35 being broken down into two lifts. One was to fly from Camp Atterbury, Indiana to Atlanta and on to Fort Bragg, North Carolina. The other group flew by another route and all were to meet to fly to Kuwait from Fort Bragg. The Atlanta group had all of the weapons. Thunderstorms delayed the Atlanta group and our trip to Kuwait turned into a journey. The other group flew on to Kuwait and waited for us to arrive with the weapons. The Atlanta group had to drive to Fort Bragg due to weather, missed the plane to Kuwait, drove to Raleigh, North Carolina, flew to Philadelphia, moved to Dover Air Force Base in Delaware to catch a C-17, on to Germany, to Italy, and finally landed in Kuwait City two days behind schedule. Landing in Kuwait was attention-grabbing to say the least. We had been

briefed, but like many other things they were just words. I got off the plane at 0200 in the morning. It was 102 degrees! It struck me – this heat is going to take some adjustment.

We all boarded a C-130 in Kuwait and flew into Baghdad. Landings at Baghdad's airport take some getting used to also. We did a combat landing. A combat landing is when the airplane comes over the airfield high enough so that it can't be engaged with man portable air defense rockets, about 10,000 feet above the ground. Al Queda was known to have some of these air defense rockets and had engaged a civilian airlift plane earlier in the year, striking one of their engines on takeoff. Once over the airfield the pilot turns the plane into a tight corkscrew turn until he can land the plane, keeping over the airfield the entire descent. And a C-130 isn't air conditioned, so it is hot! There were a lot of green faces in the cargo hold of the plane – none were due to wearing camouflage paint!

The group was met by members of the MNSTC-I staff. We were issued ammunition and given a quick convoy briefing by an outstanding young Australian Lieutenant Colonel "Mick" Ryan. He would be the first of many Coalition Partners that members of the 80th Division would work with over the next year. As an aside, I would meet Mick two years later in Darwin Australia, during that trip I learned he had just returned from a tour in Afghanistan. Our friends around the world are making great sacrifices in combating the terrorist threat too. The convoy took us to MNSTC-I headquarters in downtown Baghdad to Camp Phoenix, in the Green Zone. The convoy route, at that time, was known to be the most attacked road in Iraq. Welcome to your tour of duty!

A little history is probably good right here in the 80th Division's story for Iraq.

On September 3, 2003 the Coalition Provisional Authority established a temporary security and emergency service agency for Iraq to complement operations conducted by Coalition military forces in Iraq. Many of these forces created as a result of this order were known as Iraqi National Guard (ING) units. Most were formed without a lot of training. In April 2004 an Iraqi battalion refused to fight insurgents in Fallujah.

Soon afterward the fight in Fallujah, the U.S. military structure in Iraq was reorganized. MNF-I, Multi-National Force - Iraq was created and placed under the command of a four star general, GEN Casey. As a result of the change in structure, the most important impact for the Iraqi Army was the creation of MNSTC-I Multi-National Security and Transition Command - Iraq, under LTG Petraeus. MNSTC-I was a subordinate command to MNF-I and given the task of building up the new Iraqi Armed Forces, as well as the Ministry of the Interior and other security forces. A force generation plan

[continued on page 11](#)

was developed; it authorized ten Iraqi army divisions. Each of these ten divisions had to be created, manned, equipped, and fielded. Support, originally, would come from the coalition. That support came in many forms – logistic, fires, communications, medical, to name a few.

On 22 April 2004 under Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) orders all personnel, facilities, and equipment of the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps were transferred to the Iraqi Ministry of Defense as a component of the Iraqi Armed Forces.

The dissolution of the CPA, on June 28, 2004, did not cause the Coalition to depart Iraq. The Coalition stayed at the request of the government of Iraq and under a Mandate from the UN to help the new government develop its security forces and fight a growing insurgency. At the end of 2004, General Casey directed the Coalition forces to shift their focus from fighting insurgents to training Iraqis. This was to be the strategy for future success in Iraq.

LTG David Petraeus briefed all of us on the mission as he saw the mission. This was critical, he was the expert on the Iraqi Army that was being rebuilt. The crux of the briefing was this; the 80th Division was a key part in the exit strategy for the Coalition. Get the Iraqi Army in the fight and as they take on the mission to defeat Al Qaeda in Iraq, Coalition forces could leave the country. He stressed the 98th Division had started the process and we were to build on the foundation. After his briefing we broke down into groups to see what each would be doing for the next year. Some stayed with MNSTC-I and some went to visit the various Military Transition Teams (MiTT) at selected locations. One evening during this visit LTG Petraeus and I had the first of three private dinners to discuss the coming mission. A brilliant Soldier, I was in awe of his knowledge of the country, political processes, and problems in the Iraqi Army that I would encounter. Most Americans don't know that General Petraeus holds a Bachelor of Science degree from the United States Military Academy and he was the General George C. Marshall Award winner, as the top graduate of the US Army Command and General Staff College in 1983. He subsequently earned MPA and Ph.D. degrees in international relations from Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, and he later served as an Assistant Professor of International Relations at the US Military Academy. He also completed a fellowship at Georgetown University.

I had dinner one night with the commander of the 5th Iraqi Army Division and his staff. He related to me that he had been a Captain in the Old Iraqi Army during the Iran / Iraq war in the 1980's. Once the war was over he had immigrated to the Netherlands and opened a grocery store. Once the Saddam Regime had been removed in 2003 he had "come home." He stated that he traveled back to the Netherlands occasionally because his family still lived there and to "look after" his grocery store. It was my first meeting with an Iraqi senior officer. He spoke English well, but preferred to use an interpreter. He seemed to be aware of the mission for his unit, eliminate Al Qaeda and take over the battle space. The

motivation for him and his soldiers to get that mission done remained to be seen. I came away from the meeting not quite grasping the concept of a senior leader that divided his time between two nations. I was struck as I walked with him to my vehicle after the dinner that the parking lot was strewn with expended AK-47 cartridges. I also learned my first Arabic word, one that would become important in the mission – "Inshallah." It means God willing. The word figured prominently in the movie Rambo II, the one about the muhajadeen fighting the Russians. This meeting with my first Iraqi senior leader made me uneasy.

Our Soldiers met with the current 98th Division MiTT members to gain perspective. One of our 80th Division team members went on a patrol with the current MiTT members to the Iraq and Iran border. He and the patrol were engaged by the "bad guys." He became the first of many 80th MiTT members to be awarded the Combat Action Badge and the first to earn his combat patch.

One of my visits while in Iraq on the PDSS was with the new head of the Iraqi Army Joint Forces staff. General Babaker Shawkat B. Zebari, known simply as General Babaker, is a Kurd from northern Iraq. He is not an Arab, in a land mostly populated with Arabs. His job is to integrate the New Iraqi Army, Navy and Air Force into a cohesive force to protect his nation outside and inside of their borders. Creating Iraq's new armed forces is a daunting task for any senior officer, but especially for one without a formal military background.

The ten days for the PDSS went by quickly. On the day we were to depart from Iraq, I met the staff for the Iraq Assistance Group. They had been formed two weeks before as a provisional unit when the staff and many of the teams arrived in country. They were still trying to get their hands around the mission and stand up the command. I was impressed during our meeting with the plan they had to make IAG a reality. But as they talked I realized that we had a change in mission. The IAG mission was to build the Iraqi Army into a fighting force and the MiTT's were not trainers, they were advisors. Trainers teach and practice with their pupils. Advisors are a much different skill set. Advisors do train, but they also mentor, help to staff, leverage coalition power, set the standard through their example, and fight with the unit. MNSTC-I had built many of the ten Divisions authorized for the New Iraqi Army. They had been positioned around the country in key locations, it was time for them to learn to fight and that was the MiTT's mission – fight with the Iraqi's they were teamed with. Each of the Iraqi Army units, designated by MNF-I as being ready for operations were transferred to Multi-National Corps – Iraq for operations. The operations would be controlled by the battle space commander, usually a United States Division or Brigade commander. The MiTT's were a part of the team. They were structured into 11 to 15 man teams to live, eat, sleep and fight with their Iraqi counterparts. They would be "partnered" with Coalition units. They were the interface between the Iraqi's and Coalition. The coin of the realm was trust and, as we would discover, trust varied across the battle space. My dilemma was to

[continued on page 13](#)

## POST 50 NEWS



*Mr Brydon Jackson has been selected as the 80th Training Command (TASS) G3, SOTO*

***Edmond "Pete" Herbert Retires From HQ, 80th Training Command G3 80th Training Command BG Richard J Torres presents Pete Herbert with his Civilian Retirement Award with 80th Training Command CXO Michael L. Bland looking on. Pete, who is the former 80th Blue Ridge Association Post # 50 Secretary, retired on February 28, 2014. BG Torres, CXO Bland and Mr Herbert are all 80th Blue Ridge Post # 50 and 80th Division Veterans Association Lifetime Members.***

Blue Ridge Conference Call – 4 February 2014

1. Attendance: The 80th Blue Ridge Army Reserve Association Quarterly Telephone

Conference call was held on Tuesday night, 4 February 2014 beginning at 1900. Call Participants were Secretary Pete Herbert, Treasurer Ed Polonitza, and Board Members; Keith Brisson, Jim Brown, Charlie Elam, Paul Hoppes, Erik Imago, Brydon Jackson, John McLaren and Terry Singleton.

2. Secretary/Membership Report:

a. Pete reported we have 135 Active Members, 94 Lifetime Members and 41 Annual Members. Our latest Lifetime Members include: COL® Will Bynum and LTC Sandra Forrest. Our Current membership numbers are the same as they were last year at this time but we do have 16 members who have not responded if they will or will not be renewing their annual memberships. Anyone who would like to assist in contacting these individuals please contact our new incoming secretary Angela Robey.

b. Our 4th Annual Holiday Party was very successful and everyone had a great time. We had forty party goers and our Holiday Raffle Table raised over \$250.00 for our awards program. J.R White gave us an interesting presentation on the dozens of pairs of shoes, we collected last year for Body and Soul Ministry, that were distributed in Belize. This year we collected over 3 dozens toys for Donation to the Henrico Christmas Mother Program.

3. Treasurers Report:

a. Ed reported as of Dec 31, 2013 we had \$8,321.09 in our checking account and \$10,564.55 in our money marked for a total of \$18,885.64. Last year at this time we had a balance of \$16,555.63. Year to Date 2014 we have received \$195.00

in dues and paid the 80th Division Veterans \$2,200.00 for 2013 dues we owed. Our Balance as of February 4, 2014 is \$16,880.61.

b. Ed also announced he would be resigning as Treasurer and would like to hand over the books to the new Treasurer around the end of March 2014. Pete will send out an announcement looking for volunteers for a new Treasurer. Ed has been our Treasurer since the Association was formed in 2002 and will continue to participate as an active member.

4. Old Business: Annual Meeting & Scholarship

a. Jim Brown has been looking at some dates and locations for our 2014 Annual meeting.

He has confirmed the Holiday Inn in Hagerstown, MD could accommodate a Breakfast meeting in August if we decided to have our Annual Meeting in Conjunction with the 80th Division Veterans Reunion August 13-16. He is also looking at the possibility of a combined Golf Tournament/Annual Meeting banquet at the Meadowbrook Country Club here in Richmond. Jim will contact President Mejia and see which direction we should take.

b. Scholarship: George Croughwell would like someone else to head up the 2104 Scholarship Program but will head up the effort if no one else comes forward. Jim Brown said he would help with the process. We need to put out the announcement soon for the Scholarship Program.

5. New Business

a. John McLaren and Lee Anthony will be going to Fort Polk, LA this week to visit 80th Soldiers who will be deploying OCONUS soon. More details to follow.

6. Wrap-up: The teleconference ended at 1930. The next scheduled call will be Tue, 22 Apr 2104.

shift resources, training time and training focus. The training schedule had been set with First Army months before, we had to adapt, and we had to do the best we could with the time left available to deployment for the mission. It was 31 May, the first flight would depart for Iraq with me on the plane on 28 July. We still had to get back to Camp Atterbury and effect the changes. No one would be happy, nor would they understand the words in my return briefing – things had changed, adapt and overcome!

The 35 PDSS members left Iraq late due to the changes in our plan and the planning session we held to begin the changes need to adjust our training. We missed the out briefing for all PDSS's mandated by Third Army. I never did get in trouble for that one, I suspect that LTG Russ Honore covered for me, but I don't know that for a fact. The final issue came on our way out of Kuwait. Our list of serial numbers for weapons had one number transposed. The issue was resolved, but not without some consternation. We landed in Indiana late the next day without incident, tired but ready to fix the issues we had discovered. Our new motto became "semper Gumby" - "Always Flexible!" We were scrambling to make sure all of our Soldiers were ready to accomplish their mission and be ready to deploy in less than 60 days.

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DOD: Dec 3, 2013  
Rptd by: Son Jim

Chmar, Paul E-318  
Highlands, NC  
DOD: Dec 27, 2013  
Rptd by: Jan Elvin

Link, Albert L-317  
7 Del Mar Dr  
Springfield, IL 62703  
DOD: Dec 10, 2010  
Rptd by: Wife Mary

Pietsch, Helen VP Ladies Auxillary  
1919 Cresten Ave Apt 215  
Paso Robles, CA 93446  
DOD: Feb 21, 2014  
Rptd by: Grand Daughter, Heidi

Bedient FR  
Rptd by: Son Zane

Conner, Robert G-318  
602 Preston Rd  
Morgantown, WV 26505  
DOD: 2011  
Rptd by: Jeff Wignall

Metzger, Howard AT-317  
8400 Vamo Road #106  
Sarasota, FL 34231  
DOD: Mar 2, 2014  
Rptd by: Kay Rajnicek

Rampy, Robert B-317  
3539 Brannon Dr  
Medford, OR 97504  
DOD: Sep 20, 2013  
Rptd by: Wife Fern

Burgess, Odell 80th Spt Bn  
Richmond, VA  
DOD: Jan 2, 2014  
Rptd by: Richmond Times  
Dispatch

Deacon, Felix 80th Div G1  
Richmond, VA  
DOD: Jan 27, 2014  
Rptd by: COL(R) Will Bynum

Moorhead, Robert L-317  
1000 Putnam Blvd Apt 205  
Wallingford, PA 19086  
DOD: Dec 24, 2013  
Rptd by: Abe Barone and Cecelia  
Smith

Van Court, James H-317  
4305 Boone St NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87109  
DOD: Jan 2011  
Rptd by: Daughter Penny

Cadman, William I-317  
8034 Clovertree Ct  
North Chesterfield, VA 23235  
DOD: Dec 28, 2013  
Rptd by: Son William Jr

Drinkwater, Stuart MSG 80th Div  
Surgeon Office  
Chesterfield, VA  
DOD: Jan 4, 2014

Murdock, Charles 80th Div Band  
Petersburg, VA  
DOD: Feb 28, 2014  
Rptd by: David Gallagher

Yelo, Joe B-318  
49 Airport Rd  
Hazelton, PA 18202  
DOD: Feb 2014  
Rptd by: Daughter, Cathy

Cistolo, Felix G-317  
417 Nicholson Ave  
Ellwood City, PA 16117  
DOD: Jan 4, 2014  
Rptd by: Grandson, Adam

Hart, Edward H-318  
7 Belle Aire Dr  
Streator, IL 61364  
DOD: Unknown  
Rptd by: Jeff Wignall

...out of the past: in photos.



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Ray Stoltzman, Schriding, Germany, 1945, WW-11

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Rigg, Charles	Life	
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Scopa, Joseph	Life	
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*All communications, including articles, photos, news items for publication, change of address, dues remittances, and death notices should be addressed to the Secretary/Editor.*

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 1031 Overlook Park Lane  
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 3769 Carvins Cove Road  
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 613 Larch Lane  
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**80TH DIVISION MONUMENTS:** Infantry Museum, Fort Benning, Georgia (left), Heritage Trail at the Army Heritage and Education Center, Carlisle, Pennsylvania (center) and HQ 80th Training Command, Richmond, VA (right).

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