

**Blue Ridge 80th Division  
The Service Magazine**  
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# BLUE RIDGE

The Service Magazine  
Volume 83, Number 333

Summer — 2002  
Issue 2



Official Publication of the  
80th Division Veterans Association, Inc.

**A. E. F.**  
Artois-Picardy  
St. Mihiel  
Meuse-Argonne

**E. T. O.**  
Northern France  
Ardennes  
Rhineland  
Central Europe

## God Bless America

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*Deadline for the next issue is September 15, 2002*

# 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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3000 South A1A Hwy, Melbourne Beach, FL 32951-3421

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Service Officer .....	Felix J. Cistolo (G-317)
Flag Sergeant .....	
Color Sergeant .....	Albert J. Cresson (C-315 FA)
Sergeant-at-Arms .....	Don Davis (K-319)
Public Affairs Officer .....	George V. West (C-318)

### TRUSTEES

1 Year; Felix Cistolo (G-317)

2 Year; Robert N. Nathason (L-317)

3 Year; Robert W. Smith (K-317)

### EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

#### 1 Year

Melvin C. Beers (C-319)

Walton W. Spangler (A-319)

Robert I. Simpson (I-317)

#### 2 Years

Gerald V. Myers (G-317)

Laverne J. Schock (F-317)

Tom Pappas (F-318)

#### 3 Years

George V. West (G-318)

Andy Ferens (M-317)

Robert J. McDonald (C-319)

## Commander's REPORT



*This will be my last write-up as National Commander. The next printing of the Blue Ridge you will have a new National Commander. It has been a great honor to serve the Association for the second time. Naomi and I have enjoyed traveling to the different Posts for their meeting and parties. We have been treated so wonderful. I do hope to attend a couple more meetings before the reunion in August.*

*I do hope every member who is planning on going to the Reunion in August has sent his registration in to Chairman Eric Reilinger, it really helps with his work. Also don't forget to get your Hotel Registration in. Eric has been working hard to get things set up for a fine Reunion. Good Luck Eric.*

*Naomi and I wish to send congratulations to Doris and Bob Murrell on their 60th Wedding Anniversary. We had our 55th Wedding Anniversary also in April. Congratulations to all 80th Couples who are having a special Wedding Anniversary this year.*

*Looking forward to seeing you and your family at the 83rd Reunion of the 80th Division at the Hilton Hotel in Melbourne, Florida.*

*Clarence Brock,  
Commander*



## 2002 REUNION NEWS

ERIC REILINGER, REUNION CHAIRMAN

### ATTENTION ALL PERSONNEL!!!

Invitations for the 83rd Reunion are out. Your attendance is urgently requested at the Melbourne, FL Hilton on August 14-18, 2002

**Attend the traditional:**

#### COMMANDERS RECEPTION

Wednesday August 14th,

TICKETS REQUIRED

#### DUGOUT PARTY

Thursday, August 15th,

TICKETS REQUIRED

#### J.F. KENNEDY SPACE CENTER

Friday, August 16th,

TICKETS REQUIRED

#### MEMORIAL SERVICE

Saturday, August 17th,

WEAR AUTHORIZED RIBBONS

#### DINNER/DANCE

Saturday, August 17th

TICKETS REQUIRED

*All this and much more. All that's needed is YOU!*

**REGISTER NOW!!** This is an important announcement from the U.S. National Weather Service: High temperatures are as follows:

Washington, D.C	91 DEGREES
Pittsburgh	87 DEGREES
Philadelphia	86 DEGREES
New York	87 DEGREES
MELBOURNE, FL	78 DEGREES

These are actual readings reported as I write this article on April 20th. The point is, temperatures are not an excuse, for not coming to Florida, this August. If it's hot in Melbourne, it's probably hot in most other places. Besides, the hotel's air conditioners are working great. Another important point has to do with transportation to the Melbourne Hilton. If you can make connections to Melbourne

International, the hotel will provide free Van pick-up, if you call 768-0200. From Atlanta take Delta to Melbourne. From Tampa take Continental to Melbourne. Other than that, fly into Orlando. There is a limousine service to Melbourne. The cost for the limousine, until 5 PM is \$38, plus \$10 for each additional person. After 5 PM the cost is \$48, plus \$10 for each additional person. So carpool it with your friends, to make it reasonable. Telephone Number to call is 321-724-1600 and have your Charge Plate ready. Otherwise, the overall planning is proceeding on schedule.

**SO COME ON DOWN! You will have a great time!**

## Life Plus Club 2001-2002

Life Members who contribute over and above the Life Membership. There is no set amount, it's free will as of 1 June 2002, and I may have omitted a name. I assure you it was not intentional. Please write me if I omitted your name, it will be corrected in the next issue of the Blue Ridge. I wish to thank each and everyone of you who contribute, by donating you are helping to promote the 80th Division and help one who may be less fortunate than you or I. Gentlemen: While some of you have been faithful in sending in extra for the Life Plus Club, due to the shrinking membership (just follow the "Taps" column and close to 75% having taken Life Dues), I am asking those of you who haven't been a part of the Club

in the past, to consider making a donation over and above your Life membership. Thank You!

Bedient, Francis R.	G-317
Bredbenner, Edgar E. Jr.	
In Memory of Don Gaffney	K-317
Buss, Reno O.	A-315 FA Bn
Classen, Ruth Mrs in Memory of her husband Edward	C-317
Firestone, John P.	I-317
Koch, Charles L.	G-317
Kozelski, John	G-317
Merrill, Samuel D.	A-319
Nicoll, William	780 Ord
Parker, Charles G.	G-319
Poletti, Francis Mrs., In memory of her husband Edward	313 FA Bn
Post 43, In Memory of Don Gaffney	K-317
Scacco, Anthony A., In memory of Allen Kostenbader	A-305 Eng
Simpson, William G.	C-317
Smith, Robert W.	K-317
Sellie Thomas	F-319
Vaughn, Lemoin	L-319
Weaver, Robert L.	80th Rcn
Wilmer, Richard	Hq-314 FA Bn

### FLASH! PLEASE NOTE!

The Reunion Registration Form has a serious deficiency which may have deterred some people from registering for the upcoming reunion. The form has two lines:

PRE-REGISTRATION FEE: \_\_\_\_\_ x \$22/person

REGISTRATION (on arrival): \_\_\_\_\_ x \$25/person

**Only ONE of these lines applies to any registrant.**

*If you paid \$22 AND \$25 (some have), you will get a refund in your envelope at the reunion. Most importantly, I hope this has not been a deterrent to your signing up.*

## MAIL BAG

An E-mail from Lee Hatcher's ( A-313th FA Bn) wife she tells of Lee having suffered a stroke. He is doing well now. He has suffered weakness to the right side of his body and is having trouble with words, however he understands everything. Lees address is as follows: 3712 Henderson Road, Knoxville, TN 37931-1617. Lets all send Lee a card. Word reaches me that Marie, the wife of Fred Buscinni passed away on March 24, our condolence go out to Fred... Word from Andy Ferens M-317, his wife Helen fell and broke her hip on 3/19 and is in intensive at Presby Hospital in Pittsburgh... Camille Wurst sent me this and tells me that Henry is still courageously fighting the Prostrate Cancer. He reads the cards and letters from all of you. She sent in the following: The Council honors Brother Knight Henry Wurst as Senior Knight of the Month for the month of January 2002. Henry has been a member since 1987 and is a past Financial Secretary. Henry is a World War II veteran and very proud of his division, 80th Infantry Division commanded by Gen. McBride and fought with George Patton's Third Army, which won great recognition. He has been very active with his veteran brothers by helping to arrange several reunions over the years and being inducted as the Commander of the 80th Division Veterans Association in 1997. He honored our council by asking us to arrange for and prepare lunch for their reunion at Cantigny. Congratulations Henry.

Let's all send a card to Hank. His address is as follows: Room 311 B, Wynscape Rehab and Nursing Care, 2180 West Manchester Road Wheaton, IL 60187... Ralph Mumahan 80th Division Hq Co. 115 S Campbell Blvd. Haubstadt, IN 47639-8162 writes, on December 18th 2001 I was rear-ended by an 18 wheeler, no damage to the car, but two weeks later I had a stiff neck. In June, therapeutic treatment, July 7, migraine headache pain and right eye fuzzy. Three more trips to the doctor with pain in both jaws and joints, and was bed-ridden. Fortunately our son-in-law was with us in Hampton, because the way out of town at 75 mile per hour I black out. I got out of traffic fast and he had to drive the rest of the way home, 700 miles. On September 10th I had a brain scan and it showed an artery in front of my right ear was twice its size and two lumps in its 1/8 inch diameter. September 18th, I went to surgery and when the surgeon removed the second lump, immediately 80-85% of the pain was gone! Diagnosis-Temporal Arteritis. Guess I will be around a while longer... 702nd Tank Battalion has a Web Site of interest to the men of the 80th. Those of you who are on the net go to: www.TheTroubleshooters.com, click on Pattons Troubleshooters and start exploring... Jim Ryan 80th Signal, send me a write up that appeared in the Akron Beacon of the write up I requested having inserted in the local papers...Lionel Rothbard of Com-

## McBride Scholarship Fund

At the 82nd Annual business meeting of the Association held in Hampton, VA this year, it was brought out, that we have enough money in the fund, to carry the annual scholarships, another 14 years (including the interest during those years). It was voted and passed that we seek a Foundation to perpetuate the McBride Fund to carry on long after the last man of the 80th is gone, but to do this we needed \$10,000.00. We have exceeded that amount and we now are setting up the Foundation. We wish to THANK all of you who gave to the McBride Fund over the years. The 80th is still Moving Forward. The award of this year has been forwarded to the Madison Public Schools. Letter of acceptance appears on another page. The final amount reached is 10,152.94, over and above the Madison High School pay out.

### MAIL BAG... CONTINUED

pany B, 305 Medical BN. who was born in London had a chance to stir up some memories when he was invited to British American Business Council aboard the Queen Mary docked at Long Beach, CA, honoring the Queen of England's golden jubilee... Reporting the death of Jean Sickles, widow of Capt. Walter Sickles, Company A 319th Inf... Word reaches the Sect that the mother of Francis Rajineck passed away on May 29. She would have been 105 years of age had she lived to September.

Annon	I-318
Bocher, William E.	Hq Co. Div Arty
Bowman, Mrs. Betty in Memory of her Husband Henry	80th QM
Brockman, Mr. & Mrs	HQ 317th
Glaussen, Mrs Arnold in Memory of her husband Arnold	C-317
Futch, Archer H.	G-317
G-317 Kozelski, John	G-317
Nicoll, William O.	780 Ord
Poletti, Francis Mrs. In memory of her Husband Edward	313 FA Bn
Turner, Zane L.	H-317
Muller, Victor S. In memory of his Brother	A-317 Assoc
Zwick, William J.	B-905 FA Bn

*I have been chosen as the recipient of the General Horace McBride Scholarship Award from the 80th Division Veteran's Association for \$ 500. I am currently a senior at Madison High School in Madison, NE. Next fall I will be attending the University of Nebraska at Omaha. I plan to major in Pre-Radiology. This scholarship will help to defray my many costs. I am extremely grateful for the generous gift. This scholarship has aided many Madison students in the past and it is greatly appreciated. I wish you well and I thank you and the Association for this scholarship.*

*Sincerely, James A. Borer  
Box 914 1003 Roosevelt Circle  
Madison, NE 68748*

*With the above letter, this will be the last time we as an Association will be making this award. From here on the Foundation will be doing it, but we will still get a letter of thanks.*

## “TAPS”

Atnip, William James E-319  
149 Grande Ave Glasgow, KY 42141  
5/19/01 Rptd by Sellie Thomas

Boston, Clarence C-314 FA Bn  
PO Box 73 Nashville, IN 47448-0073  
5/4/02 Rptd by Charlie Parker

Christopher, K.W. SV-318  
1220 12th St., Vienna, WV 26105-2118  
Unknown Rptd by Mail return

Collins, Sam L. A-319  
804 Fairway Dr., Kannapolis, NC 28081  
3/01/02 Rptd by Luther Weaver

Cookson, Harold R. G-317  
25 Charlotte Ave Bradford, PA 16701  
5/25/02

Cooper, Hugh B-905 FA Bn  
6422 Old US 68 Georgetown, OH 45121  
5/21/02 Rptd by Lester Schlarge

Crofoot, George L-317  
128 E Borley Ave Mishawaka, IN 46545  
4/14/02 Rptd By Angelo Barone

Dratz Eddie 905 FA Bn  
1405 Camelot Manor Portage, IN 46368  
Unknown Rptd by Lester Schlarger 4/21/02

Dean, Norman M-317  
RR 2 Box 2406C Wayne, WV 25570  
5/21/02 Rptd by Wayne Jacobs

Gaffney, Donald J. K-317  
8464 Henry Clay Blvd Clay, NY 13041  
3/12/02 Rptd by NY Newspaper Reporter

Gammill, John E. HQ-905 FA Bn  
1865 Kentucky Ave Birmingham, AL 35216  
Unknown, Rptd by mail return

Geckler, Maurice M. 2/7/02  
East Sparta, OH Rptd By Sellie Thomas

Hanson Everett HQ 305 Eng  
P.O. Box 966 Keman, TX 77565-0966  
5/29/02 Rptd by Byron Dovenbarger

Hiller John J. Unknown  
Bethlehem PA 5/1/02  
Newspaper Obit Reptd by Reno O. Buss

Horsak, Ollie G-318  
3900 Frederick, Waco, TX  
2/23/02 Rptd by Al Reed

Hosinski, Dennis F. F-317  
Michigan City, IN  
3/18/02 Rptd by Gaylord Smith

Kostenbader, Allen A-305 Eng  
333 Longlore Rd Wind Gap, PA 18091  
4/12/02 Rptd by Anthony Scaaco

Leonard, Wallace A-319  
325-2nd Street Earl, AR 72331  
1/02 Rptd by Luther Weaver

Lolmaugh, Ross M. G-317  
12451 Garr Rd., Buchanan, MI 49107  
Fall of 2001 Rptd by Friend

Maher, Francis D. I-319  
10880 SE 74th Ct Belleview, FL 34420  
Unknown Rptd by Postal return marked  
Deceased

Rassau, Paul W. Med 319/905 FA Bn  
225 2nd Street Freeport, PA 16229-1032  
3/15/02 Rptd by Daughter

Steger, Elmer H. 80th QM  
6575 Fair School Rd, Glen Rock, PA  
17327-7846 — 3/9/02 Rptd by son

Thompson, Donald B. 5/24/02  
415 Buffalo St., Beaver, PA 15009-2003  
5/24/02 Rptd by A. Barone

Talcott, Raymond C-313 FA Bn  
3816 Amberwood Lane  
Bakersfeild, CA 93309  
Unknown Rptd by Jim Phillips

Wiley, Wallace R. A-318  
PO Box 305 Hawkinsville, GA 3136-0395  
1/24/2001 Pprt by Reunion Letter return

Williams, Frank A. F-318  
San Antonia, TX 78232  
5/02 Rptd by Bob Fasnacht

## WORLD WAR I MAN HONORED

Private Charles N. Parcell, whose “extraordinary heroism in action near Nantillos, France, October 5, 1918” earned him the United States Distinguished Service Cross. While under heavy enemy fire, he succeeded in carrying messages from the platoon commander to squad leaders. The citation noted that “twice wounded in the face by shrapnel, he continued his duties until ordered to the dressing station.” A newspaper account later related the circumstances under which Parcell received the Distinguished Service Cross along with the French Croix de Guerre. During the Battle of the Meuse-Argonne, the final major battle of the war Parcell’s Company D, 317th Infantry, 80th Division, came under heavy enemy machine-gun and shell-fire while awaiting orders to advance. The “din of battle was so intense” that the officers realized their orders could not be heard. When plans to relay those orders to each corporal and from him to the men developed a hitch, “Parchell arose to the emergency. In full view of the Germans he ran down the line of the company and communicated the orders to each corporal. Six machine gun nests peppered diligently at Parchell, but he was not hit. He said the bullets were kicking up tufts of dirt all around him, and they sounded like a drove of bees around his head.”

Soon thereafter, his platoon became separated from the kitchens. Serving as the platoons dispatch runner, “Parchell was sent over a deso-

late hill to look for the ‘Chow Wagons’ but failed to find them. He did, however, find two men in the U.S. uniforms, one of the 315th and the other of the 319th Infantries, whom he queried about the kitchens. As the men spoke with suspicious accents, Parcell “marched them to his commanding officer, who, incidentally, was the son of Secretary of the Treasury Carter Glass” (Captain Powell Glass). For this action he received the Italian Croix de Guerre. The French Medaille Militaire was presented to him “for carrying dispatches on foot under shell and machine gun fire.” Parcell received shrapnel wounds in his face when a shell burst close by and a fragment lodged immediately under his right eye. Discharged from service in March 1919, Parchell returned home but soon afterward entered the Marine Hospital at Wyman Park, Maryland, for treatment of an infected bone near his eye and complications caused by inhaling chlorine gas. When his treatment was completed, Parcell returned to his farm in Franklin, VA and later published a series of articles about his war experiences.

In addition to the above I wish to add the many works that Mr. and Mrs. Smith, Fayetteville, PA, whose Grandfather was in the 80th in WWI. It all started when Dr. Anthony another son of an 80th man called me one day and ask if he and the Smiths could meet at my home. Who spend many hours researching the 80th Division in WW I and have helped numerous people who have come to me for help. I forward the E-mail to the Smiths and I wish all could see the many people they have helped.

## COLD WAR CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION

If you were in Europe at the end of the war, from 2 September 1945 to 26 December 1991 you are eligible for this certificate of Recognition. Send a copy of your Discharge along with your Social Security Number to:

CDR, PERSCOM  
COLD WAR RECOGNITION  
HOFFMAN II  
ATTN; TAPC-CWRS, 3N45  
200 Stovall Street  
Alexandria, VA 22332-0473

Please send me a "Cold War Recognition Certificate" for my service to the United States government during the authorized period of September 2, 1945 to December 26,

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### Secretary's REPORT

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FAX: (412) 828-7651

E-MAIL: Divinf80@AOL.Com

I retain the right to eliminate any news that doesn't pertain to the 80th, such as Vacations, Ocean Voyages, etc.

**Harry L. Hittinger:** *This man's address was lost when I threw my papers away accidentally. Anyone having his Address please forward to the Secretary.*

1991. Enclosed is a copy of source document with my Social Security Number/Military Service Number/Foreign Service Number, which verifies my service during the Cold War Era. I understand that the enclosed copy of source document will not be returned. Please mail my Cold War Recognition Certificate to the following address:

Your Name  
Your Address  
Your City and State.

Submission of this request confirms my faithful service was in the Armed Forces, I further certify that my discharge was Honorable or general under honorable conditions. If I served as a civilian employee, I further certify that the character of my service was honorable.

Sincerely,  
Your name

*I am told this is a handsome piece and is signed by Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and its not too late to apply.*

---

### Welcome New MEMBERS

---

Gumbarevic, Anthony E. / B-319  
115 Kurtz Lane  
Jefferson, PA 15344

Francis Fife / K-318  
PO Box 557  
Charlotte, VA 22902-0557

Glessnor, Harold / AT-319  
PO BOX 442  
Ligonier, PA 15658  
724-238-7675

## HELP-HELP...

I have received the following request for information. They are as follows:

*I had a relative who belonged to the 319th Infantry Company K, who was KIA on 12/24/1944, during the Battle of the Bulge. His remains were returned home, however I do not know any details of his death. If you would be kind enough to give me the information I seek, casualty list of After Action Reports would be most welcome. I may be reached by writing Richard L. Scott 18063 Lake Hills Drive Spring Lake, MI 49456 or by E-mail. Captrscott04@aol.com.*

*Relatives of Edgar Harold Lloyd would like information on his military service. Lloyd was a rifle platoon leader with Company E, 319 Infantry. He was awarded the CMH for an action near Pompey, France on 14 Sept. 1944 and was KIA on 16 Nov. 1944. Any and all information will be greatly appreciated. Contact Kirk Kellogg, 718 Filip Road, Los Altos, CA 94024 or call me at 650-969-9931. I am sorry I have waited all these years to undertake this search. Hopefully, it will not be too late.*

*My Name is Tim Clutts, I am writing you in hopes you can help me. My Uncle PFC Jim Clutts was a member of the 318th. He was WIA in June 1944 and was KIA 26 November 1944 at Nancy. He is buried in the Lorraine Cemetery at St. Avold, France. Anyone having recollections, please contact me. Tim Clutts, U.S. Army retired, 21316 Myrtlewood Dr, Athens, Alabama 35614.*

*Mary Alice Thomas, daughter of the late Edward P. Thomas, M-319, has an album of pictures her dad took and saved over the years of his tour in Europe. She is willing to share these pictures of the history of the 80th in WWII. Her address is as follows: E-mail. MAP!MOM@aol.com. Her home address is, Mary Alice (Thomas) Pilon, 3 Barker Street. Albany, NY 12205.*

*Judy L. Bezjak of 20 W Wend St LeMont, IL 60439-4491 asks if anyone would remember her Uncle Tony Ruzich, who was KIA on 25 December 1944.*

*Any one knowing or remembering Cpl. Floyd L. Horton approximately 35 years old at the time he was in service. Probably was a company clerk, he was a talented artist, played the guitar and banjo well and had a pleasant tenor voice. Contact Mrs. Alma Horton Gillispie 5900 Hanover, Wichita, Kansas 67220-1872. Also the company he was in.*

*Edward Mohr, 306 Winsor Drive Friendswood, TX 77546, 281-992-7542 asks if anyone remembers her father, Edward George Mohr of K-319. Please answer if you knew him.*

*I am searching for my grandfather, Sgt. Ewell I. Baldwin who was KIA on 14 September 1944, near Nancy, France. He was in the 317th Regiment, I don't have the Company, family letters indicate he was a cook. I have no photos or information, if you can help me I would appreciate it. Mike Seeley 119 Hartwell Ave. Littleton, MA 01460*

**The following comments are presented by  
Gerald V. Myers, Company G  
317th Infantry.**

Our trip to Luxembourg to share the annual (5) day Celebration, "The Days of Friendship" sponsored by the U.S. Veterans Friends Organization for those American Veterans that fought in the Battle of the Bulge and to free Luxembourg from the Nazi forces.

Tuesday, June 19, 2001 my wife, Bobbie and I de-plane at the Luxembourg City Airport at 11:00 A.M. There waiting for our arrival was three friendly faces, Constant Georgian, John Parker and George Daubenfield. Constant is the president of U.S. Veterans Friends of Luxembourg. John Parker is from Fruitland, FL and Beaufort, Luxembourg. He is a retired 8th Air Corps Colonel who lives six months in the U.S. A. and six months in Luxembourg. John is married to Felicia, A Luxembourg citizen/ George Daubenfield knows everyone in Luxembourg. He also knows every battlefield, foxhole and every historical WW II location in the eastern Bulge area. His hobby is scouring battlefields with his elaborate metal detector. I learned later in the week that he has boxes of fragments, which he has found.

After a welcomed lunch, Constant went home to finish his plans for the next five days of celebration. John and George took Bobbie and me to our hotel. Our Hotel, Hastellerie De Beaufort, in Beaufort,, Luxembourg was located only five miles west of Bollendorf and Dillingen where the 317th Infantry of the 80th Division crossed the

Sauer River in February 1945. The hotel was newly refurbished. It was a beautiful place to stay. The owners were friendly, hospitable and the wife spoke very good English. John had a business in Echternach, Luxembourg in the afternoon so I rode along to talk and see the sights. On our way back to Beaufort we took the North Sauer Road. The hills and bluffs were still steep and rolling down to the riverbank. It was much friendlier than I remembered it in February 1945.

Just north of Echternach is a monument at the point where the 5th Infantry crossed the Sauer River. Traveling north, you pass the Villages of Dillingen, Bollendorf and Wallendorf. The Sauer River is now beautiful fishing stream about 80 feet wide.

Our road turned back south at Reisdorf up the mountain to Beaufort. Two miles south is another monument dedicated to "The Gallant Men of Company C, 60th AIB, 9th Armored Division who defended that area December 16-19, 1944.

Below this point, the hill has a gradual ledge overlooking the Sauer River Valley where the Germans attacked. T/Sgt. Herbert and his men had a field day. Citizens of Beaufort and Reisdorf are reconstructing the foxholes and machine gun emplacements for this battle location. Many trees show he scars of December 14, 16 and 18, 1944. Very visible today.

A short distance up the moun-

tain is a brass directional plate pointing to each village.

Wednesday, June 20- Today, Constance Goergan and his group had arranged a tour of Luxembourg City. Picking Bobbie and me up at our hotel at 10:00 A.M. to join the rest of the group at the Golden Lady Monument, located in the center of the city overlooking the cliffs of the Alzette River which wind through the city.

The group consisted of Herb Elmore and his friend from Frewsburg, NY, 5th Armored Division, Robert Harmon, Seattle WA. 319th Regiment, James Lipscomb, Mont Larral, NJ, 761st Tank Bn. Bernd Schmidt and his wife, Weimar, Germany, the President of the German Chapter of U.S. Veterans Friends and three sisters, Linda, Patty and Peggy Privett. They lost their father during the Bulge fighting January 20, 1945 near Brandenburg, Lux. The rest of the group consisted of three newspaper reporters, a photographer and members of the U.S. Veterans Friends. They were with us all five days.

John Parker took Bobbie and me to the mayors office in Ettelbruck. On the south side of town is a Roundabout dedicated to Col. L. McVicker 318th Commander. It is a large roundabout and beautiful. We had been invited to the mayor's office in Ettelbruck when he heard a 80th Veteran was close by. I was presented with the General George Patton Medal. Many city employees attended the reception.

After an enjoyable cruise on the Mosell River where we saw beautiful scenery, grape vines, forests and castles.

Lunch was served in a castle

near the Mosell, after leaving we traveled back through Mullerthall Valley where we saw a monument dedicated to the 9th Armored Division, and at Haller we saw many monuments dedicated to the 3rd Armored Field Artillery, 60th Armored Infantry, 9th Armored Engineers, 811th Tank Battalion, 131st Ordinance and the 2nd Medical Battalion. All had fought in this area.

At 7:00 P.M. I took part in laying a wreath for the 5th Armored Division at Schuttrang. This was followed by a banquet where each person was presented a book of photos of damaged buildings and how they look today.

Friday June 22 The group attended a wreath placing ceremony at a monument in Bertrang dedicated to the 5th Armored Division. They were the first to return and free the people of Nazi occupation. A lunch followed.

After lunch we traveled to Heiderscheid where Bob Harmon 319th Infantry and me 317th Infantry placed a wreath at the 80th Infantry Division Monument in memory of the 80th Division lost during the Bulge and all others who fought here. From Heiderscheid we traveled to Tadler, Ringel, Barscheild, Kehman and Scheidel. The 80th Division lost many men taking back the frozen hills and valleys.

We traveled to Goesdorf where flowers were placed at a monument in honor of Pvt. Alferd Echerverry who was KIA at that point January 13, 1945.

Robert Harmon of the 319th Regiment was honored by a decla-

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE:

ration of having been named an honorary citizen of Goesdorf. During the battle he rescued a five-year-old boy from the village streets after he was injured by German Artillery. Felix Cistolo G-317 joined our group at this point for the next two days of the celebration, along with his two sons. They were en route to Italy to visit Felix's relatives. The citizens of Goesdorf gave us a banquet and a gift for each of us.

Saturday June 23- this was the day we were asked to dress up with our medals, ribbons, etc. because it was the national holiday and celebration of the Grand Duke's Birthday. Each person in our group had been given a formal invitation to attend this spectacular ceremony in the massive cathedral Notre-Dame in Luxembourg City. The prayer and musical ceremony was to honor the Grand Duke and the Grand Ducal family. We Americans and the rest of the group were seated in an elevated place of honor facing the people in the cathedral. The Grand Duke sat no more than twelve feet away from us.

The Grand Duke and his family was the last to enter the cathedral, everyone standing in his honor. As he was seated he gave a slight nod toward us as to say thank you.

When the ceremony was complete, we exited the cathedral by a side entrance where the Archbishop shook our hand and asks who we were and where we were from. The Ambassadors of Belgium and Holland introduced themselves and their wives to Bobbie and I. Also Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Loftus from the U.S. Embassy introduced themselves and wish us well.

The banquet was an outstanding affair. Each American received

a beautiful plate with the picture of a house representing Conturn. There were fireworks after dark to celebrate the National Holiday.

Sunday June 24- A commemorative mass was held in the church in Dahl in honor of those KIA in that commune and the surrounding battles of WWII. The priest, then Constant Goergan mad comments that expressed the thanks for what the American GIs did to free Luxembourg from the Nazi's in 1945.

We were invited to the Lener's farm outside of Dahl for a food feast, the lunch having been prepared by ladies of Dahl.

There was ceremony at the monument of Sgt. Day Turner, who was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for risking his life above and beyond the call of duty, took place at the farm house on \* January 1945. The U.S. Flag and the placing of flowers at the Monument were by Robert Harmon, Felix Cistolo and myself G. Virgil Myers.

We then traveled to a road junction leading to Bastogne and Wiltz, where a beautiful monument to all the units that fought in the Bulge. They have recently erected a plaque of bronze highlighting each military by different colors. It is a brick structure standing four by six feet and very sturdy.

From there we visited the 90th Division Monument in Berle, the 26th near Esch-Dorf., and also the memorial to U.S. Veterans located on a hill east of Bastogne. It overlooks the 4th Armored Division and the attached 1st Bn of 318 Regiment from the 80th Division, advancing through the woods on 26 December 1944.

Later that night we gathered in Sandweiler at the monument of the

5th Armored Division, who freed the town in September 1944.

Our final banquet of the Remembrance was one we all will remember. The food, wine was great but the friendship shown by the people of Luxembourg is unforgettable. What wonderful Hosts! Words can hardly describe it. After the banquet we were presented a large book, ten inches by thirteen inches and 250 pages in high gloss print and beautiful color pictures of the village and countryside of Sandweiler. Many picture of 1944 and how they look today.

Monday June 25- In the morning, Camille Kohn, Fernando Zens and John Parker joined Bobbie and me for breakfast and I presented

Camille with an American Flag that had flown over the U.S. Capital in his name. Our plane did not leave until 10:30 A.M. Tuesday so John insisted we go to for a tour of Little Switzerland. We visited the park and giant boulders, where many GIs tried to find safety when the Germans overrun that part of Luxembourg. We visited numerous other places including a visit to Tilly, who was very happy to see us, and talked about her American GI boyfriends.

Flying back and reflecting on our trip to Luxembourg we thought that it was the highlight of our travel experiences.

G. Virgil Myers / G, 317th

Name of Cemeteries where Men from the 80th are buried		
NAME OF CEMETERY	WAR	# OF MEN BURIED
Cambridge, England	WW2	7
Henri-Chapelle, Belgium	WW1	41
Ardennes, Belgium	WW2	13
Aisne-Marne, France	WW1	6
Brittany, France	WW2	54
Epinal, France	WW2	63
Lorraine, France	WW2	735
Meuse-Argonne, France	WW1	475
Normandy, France	WW2	6
Oisne-Aisne, France	WW1	10
St. Mihiel, France	WW1	46
Somme, France	WW1	20
Suresnes, France	WW1	9
Hamm, Luxembourg	WW2	504
Netherlands	WW2	59
TOTAL		2048



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## Rcn. Post #37

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Well, it is that time again! I apologize because I've been so lax in writing, but I'm in the same state as all of us- "Senior Moments" and lack of energy!

Those of you who have kept in touch with the 80th Association should have received your Reunion papers. Have you paid your 80th dues, see form in the Blue Ridge.

Write to Eric if you need information regardless whether you are going or not. I urge you to be a good Post 37 member and contribute what you can to show that the Post still cares. Get on the ball. Do it today.

I won't be going, but have my pre-registration, Patrons Listing, Raffle tickets, and the Post AD for the Program. I'll be there in spirit, if not in body.

I hope some of you will be in Melbourne. So far I can't tell you if anyone will be there for sure. Talked to Joe Hege, he had health problems along with red tape on the Rcn book, but don't give up, it will be coming as soon as possible.

Tell you what to do! During that weekend (Aug. 14-14) sit down, get out your pictures and relive our wild weekends, the joy of being together, the tears, the laughter, the stories (some real some fabricated) the sight we saw, the food we ate, the rivers of beer that we consumed. Call a Rcn buddy you haven't forgotten or talked to for a long time. Write several letters. (one to me.)

Use your energy, paper, pen and stamp to write me. While your energy is flowing think about whether you need and want a copy of our

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## Florida Post #47

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Thanks to the United States Post Office most of our business correspondence is now directed to our temporary address in Florida and we now have to systematically correct their error. Small price to pay to spend our golden years wintering in the sun.

We were saddened to hear of the death of Francis Maher. Our deepest sympathy to his wife Anne and family. He was one of our newest post members.

Our March meeting in Melbourne was another great success not only due to the excellent Florida brochure like weather, but also the comradeship of all those who attended. Special thanks to all those lovely ladies (bless their hearts what in the world would we do without them) who toiled in the kitchen and laid out those delicious displayed and tasty meals also the copious beverages supplied.

Everyone attending appreciates the facility so much that we signed a two-year contract that was unanimously approved. It will be the same weekend and the same rate.

Our fall meeting will be Novem-

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address list. I haven't develop mental telepathy yet, so I have to depend on your written word.

To those of you who and yours who are ill, my sincere prayers and thoughts. Let me know, confidentiality if you wish. With Love, your ever faithful, sometime engeryless, "STICKY" Write Now.

ber 1st and 2nd, 2002 at the Hampton Inn, 3434 SW College Road, Ocala, FL. 34474, 352-854-3200. Room rates will be \$61.00. Reservations must be made no later than October 9, 2002. Rates are good 3 days prior and 3 days after the meeting. When making your reservations make sure that you tell them you are with the Florida Post 47 and Code F47.

At this time I would like to say that the 80th Division Veterans Association is a Fraternal Organization dedicated to the comradeship that exists between us due to the hardships we experienced during the war in which most of us bled.

Our most effective form of communication is the Blue Ridge Magazine. Our only significant source of income is the National Reunion.

There has been a change in the type of articles and Post reports submitted and then printed. There has been a change in the editing of items submitted.

Most notably the publishing of derogatory items in reference to the National Reunion, not just the upcoming one in Melbourne, FL. But there also have been previous slurs. Some of these items have been written by men who do not have the dedication to put on a reunion therefor speak with an unqualified voice. If we want successful reunions these slurs must be eliminated.

Francis Rajnicek, Sect. Past National Commander Former Reunion Chairman.

*I have printed the last two paragraphs even though they contain slurs and derogatory remarks. Editor*

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## Co. M 318th Inf. Post #44

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Had a letter from Jack Stumcke, he writes I am still around, but under the care of both doctor and nurses three times a week. I am on a walker and also use a wheel chair and I am getting better slowly. Jack phoned and said he is now in an Assisted Living Home. Best wishes to all my buddy's.... I have no other news due to the fact you of Company M 318 never write. I don't know if you are living or dead. On 16 April, Doris and I celebrated our 60th Wedding Anniversary. Our children and friends purchased 60 gifts of all different items none over \$ 5.00. After a long day they took us out to our favorite Veltrees Restaurant high on a hilltop near our home overlooking the Allegheny River and towns below. Afterward home to Cake and all the good friendship that goes with a long day. We wish to thank those of you, who sent cards, we appreciate your friendship.... Have just been told I need another knee on the right. Have had two replacements on the left. Had a nice long talk with James Sinard on the 6th of May. Remembering old time and buddy's. Says he too has been married 65 years. Congratulations to Jim and his wife.

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## Post #36 3d Bn., 317 Inf.

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As everyone knows, when returning from an extended trip or stay, there is a lot to catch up on. For one is the column for the 3rd Bn 317th.

Lucille Clark (I) wrote to let everyone know she appreciated the money, cards and prayers and other acts of kindness shown her during her loss of Oscar. She put the money into a special fund and bought an Oak flag display case, which holds O.E.s medals. It is so special to her as each one of you.

It is with sadness to report that George Crofott (L) passed away on April 14. He had a military funeral. George and Dolly attended many reunions years ago, the last one in 1997. They were married 54 years. George was quite knowledgeable about economic and political affairs and enjoyed discussing them. It didn't make any difference which side of the fence you were on. We will miss George. The 3rd Bn made a memorial gift to Dolly.

On a brighter note, we hear that Rex Kibbe (L) is doing much better. Bob Parks tells us Rex is now able to walk to the dining room for meals with help. He and Cecelia thank everyone for their cards, calls prayers and support. Rex really perks up and appreciates notes from everyone in the 80th. Rex's home address is: P.O. Box 371, Scobey, MT 59263.

Bob also informs me that Mike Sutich (L) in Sand Coule, Montana 59472, live alone on his farm. His wife is in a nursing facility. She may be able to go back to the farm with Mike.

I received a letter from a Robert G. Odgen whose father PGF Eugene G. McKnight (L) was KIA on Jan. 8, 1945 in and around Luxembourg City, inquiring if anyone in (L) Company might have any information at the time. Robert's address is: 8208 Sehome Rd., Blaine, WA 98230, Phone: 360-392-0624.

The Barones grandson, Chad Marianelli, who attended many reunions with his parents and grandparents graduates from High School with honors and a 4 year scholarship from Maryland University in Scranton, PA. Chad was very active in sports at the school. Congratulations to Chad, his parents and grandparents.

I hear that the Barones and Bob Smith will attend the New York Post Meeting in Albany on Memorial Day weekend May 23-27, 2002.

I appeal to members in other units in the 3rd Bn to please send me news of happenings so that mention is made in the column. My address is: Newtown Towers, Apt 204-B, 3400 West Chester Pike, Newtown Square, PA 19073.

Information about the reunion has been mailed out. We urge all to register early. Our prayers and thoughts are with those who are ill and hope for a speedy recovery.

*Bob Nathason, Sect.*

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### NO REPORT:

**L-318**

**Post #39**

**305th Engineers Post #40**

**Brett Post #3**

**Co F 318 Post # 46**

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## Lane Hall Post #42 313 F.A. Bn

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The 313th FA Bn met in Parkersburg, WV for a Mini Reunion on May 8th to the 12. Among those present were: Karl and Audery Blocker, Charlie and Alice Noxon, Jeanette and Dom Abburzase, Willis and Hazel Fraley, and their son and grandson, Ruth and Jim Phillips, Helen Lang, Francis Poletti, Charles Phillips, Mary and Jim Brinker, Bob and Doris Murrell, Lee and Ann Hatcher, Reva Lasserre, Hilda Latusek, Herman Newsome, his wife and son, Ed Hargraves, Gerald Tristano and Susan Ambrosic.

The group met at the Econo Lodge in Parkersburg, WV and were greeted by the manager, Neil Patel, who went out of his way to make our stay a very enjoyable one, supplying them with a meeting room and helping in any way he could.

Some of the places visited by the group, were the Fenton Glass Works, Valley Gen Sternwheller, Underground Railroad, Trolley Tours of Historical Martietta, OH, Beckey Thatcher Showboat Theatre, Grand Central Mall, Historical Harman Village, Middleton Doll Factory, and many more.

The group went to dinner on Friday evening at Columbo's in Parkersburg and enjoyed a very good time being together. On Saturday evening, a variety of Pizzas were enjoyed by all.

We were pleased to have as guests Bob and Doris Murrell. They visited places in Parkersburg, having lived there years ago, and were able to look up some old friends there.

I was overwhelmed with the turnout at the Mini. Never expected 30

people. Bob and Doris Murrell added something different. As far as I know, this was the first time we have had the Secretary of the 80th Division Associate participate in our Mini-Reunion. As always, Charlie Noxon entertained us and Doc Blocker joined him.

Thanks to the generosity of all who attended, now have \$677 in our Post Treasury.

By now you should have received an up-date listing of addresses and Phone Numbers. Again Fran did most of the work. As you notice, we sold our house and are now living in a retirement community managed by the PA Masonic Organization. Quite a big adjustment but it is getting better every day. God Bless and keep in touch. Send News!

*Jim Phillips Sect/Treas.*

## Ladies Auxiliary

The National Ladies Auxiliary had a fine turn out at the FL Post meeting, March 14-17 at the Holiday Inn Melbourne Beach, FL. Of course Mother Nature did her best to give everyone a great sunny week, -Temps in 80s and 90s'. Present were: Natl. Pres. Rita Kutch, 1st Vice Pres. Ida Reilinger, National Chaplain, Kay Rajnicek, PNP, National Sect Cindy McGraw, Sgt At Arms Helen West. Past Natl Pres. Cara Lee Davis, Alice Schmidt, Marcelle Haley, Betty Hook, Rose Palimetto, Naomi Brockman. And many other ladies who belong to the National. The ladies and their husbands are looking forward to seeing the 80th folks at the 83rd Reunion in Melbourne, FL.

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## *Post #33 Co. H, Inf.*

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Received a nice letter from C.D. Clements. He said his health was so good he can now carry a cane. Also the soft life now provides him with a ride up and down the stair on his new chair lift.

Talked to Jean Poppen. She is carrying on the easy life as a senior citizen. She will probably be getting the itch to follow the little white golf ball.

Al Conway, known as "Four", died on or about 27 April 2002. Al's death was somewhat of a shock to all his friends. He always had a smile on his face and an appropriate quip for most occasions. He had a knack of remembering events and actions of men in the company. He served in Company H from Camp Forrest until the end of the war. Al was nicknamed "Four" because of his supply duties. As a new Second Lieutenant, I was assigned as supply officer and came to know Al very well. He preformed his job in supply as a professional. I think Al's early life spent in Ghlitzen and Altoona, PA. Later he moved to Erie where he resided until his death. Condolences to his wife and family.

Irv Robinson recently had a chance meeting with Phillis Fish, an army nurse that had attended to him while convalescing at an army hospital in England. Yes, the year was 1944. What a memory! Not surprising for Irv!

Congratulations to Hilda for being honored by Leisure World Art Association.

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## *New York Post #43*

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The latest report shows we lost another long time member. Don Gaffney, our Post Commander, and a life member of the post. He served in Company K, 317th. We give a gift and Life-Plus in lieu of flowers.

As I reported in our last news letter we are all set for our three post meetings. Our annual gathering in Albany, NY, at the Turf Inn for four day, Memorial Day weekend, May 23-27, 2002. Election of officers and good food and fellowship is on the menu. We always have a short meeting at the convention. Check bulletin board for data. The fall gathering will be in Geneva, NY, at the Ramada Lakefront Hotel. A beautiful site right in the wine making area of the Finger Lakes. Between the color, the wines and the accommodations it should be idea. The dates are a Monday-Friday time, October 7-11, 2002. Already planning on 2003 for annual meeting at the Turf Inn, Albany, NY and back to Ithaca, NY the fall of 2003, for football, food and fellowship. More later.

Best to all, and keep healthy and listen to your wife and doctor.

*Edward Bredbenner, Sect.*

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Hope all are preparing to attend the 80th reunion in Melbourne, FL. John, Penny, and Jerry is planning to attending. They are looking forward to seeing you all. Hope to see all of you in FL.

*God Bless. Ohly*

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## *Cincinnati Post #34*

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*This report got in too late for the last edition.*

We had our monthly dinner meeting at Norwood with the following present:

Russell Sick, PNC, Commander, Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Obel, Mr. and Mrs. Art Rehling, Mr. and Mrs. Stan Benzinger, Rita Hollweck and Marge Wulker, Mel Schmidt, Mr. and Mrs. Howard Macke, Mr. and Mrs. John T. Wettig, Sr.

The weather here in Cincinnati has been cold but we should expect that kind of weather. There has been "quite of Bluster" of wind this past week. In Covington Kentucky the winds removed telephone lines and electric lines from their mounts. But this is March. Temperatures have been "way off" at times. Down to 27 this morning and to 55 this afternoon. Say hello to everyone for the Cincinnati Post.

*John Wettig, Sr.*

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## *DV and DV Hqs Co. Post #39*

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It has been almost two months since Marie passed away and let me tell you, it hasn't been easy. There is a huge void in my life that TV, reading or writing can't fill. However, I have faith that things will get better with time.

It is sad that Post 39 will not be represented at the Melbourne Reunion. It will be the first time this has happened since we got our Charter in Cleveland, OH in 1970. I believe that it is incumbent upon all 39ers to support our 80th Association Reunion. We can do that by buying the award tickets at \$2.00 each and by placing your name or names in the Patron Listing in the Reunion Program at \$3.00 per name.

I, as Treasurer of Post 39 will place a \$20.00 AD in the Program. All this must reach the Reunion Chairman by July 19th.

I, and my son Raymond and his family send our heartfelt thanks to all of you and cards and Mass Cards, money and Flowers. We were overwhelmed by your kindness and caring.

*Fred Buscarini Sect/Treas.*

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## Co. L 319th Inf.

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Where has the year gone? Here it is the end of May as I write this report and it seems only weeks ago that I made the last report. I suppose as we get older we want the days to be longer but as luck would have it they remain 24 hours.

I received a nice letter from Jim Young and am happy to report that your prayers and good wishes has helped his recovery from open heart surgery and a double by-pass.

Jim has just returned from a three week cruise having left Florida, cruised the Caribbean, went through the Panama Canal onto the Mexican Riviera. Jim said he did some recuperating on the trip and felt he came back better then when he left. I know you are elated, as I am that he has made a significant recovery from his illness.

Rudy Berman—excuse me Corporal Rudy Berman—is having some back problems and has undergone three Epidural Nerve Blocks with no success in relieving the pain. He is also having some “older men “ problems. Rudy blames the problems he is having on the fact that he did a lot of horseback riding in his younger years. He vows that in his next life he will not get near a horse.

Rudy will soon have another visitor from the old country. This time it will be the daughter of a friend he has not seen in 66 years. Should be an interesting get together. His boyhood friend incidentally fought for the German Army in W.W.II.

I received an E-mail from Jerry Fine. He wrote that he would be

attending the Melbourne Reunion.

Jerry has been living in Florida since 1988 and enjoys every minute of it. He plays golf 3 times a week, spends time on the computer and is active in politics. He teaches street English to two women from Venezuela and is mentor for a 13-year-old boy. He like all of us has had his share of health problems.

John Flynn has a new brace for his leg, the third one at last count. He said the brace is much better but his ballet teacher told him he has a long way to go. John and Betts of course are going to be in Melbourne, but John is worried that he may have to take his pants off at the airport and everyone around him will get the shock of their life. If something is so tiny that it can't be seen, how will that shock anyone? (Just kidding John)

If you all remember, I sent you some information about the French Consulate awarding Certificates to all veterans who helped liberate France.

In the case of John Balas, he received a letter from the Consulate inviting him to attend an awards ceremony in Daly Plaza in downtown Chicago. He along with about 500 Veterans attended the ceremony and after speeches by the French Consular and Mayor Daly, he received his certificate. After the awards an Honor Guard posted the Colors and some French school children made short remarks. It sounds like it was a very nice affair but a car that crashed into a crowded restaurant injuring 6 people disrupted it. Fortunately the car hit some scaffolding before it crashed into the restaurant so the injury list was not as large as it could have been.

Lemoine Vaughn wrote at

Christmas that he and his lady friend would not be attending the Melbourne Reunion. We will certainly miss Lemoine and Zoo.

The 2 busy Bees, Bill and Billie Krehbiel are still at it. Bill and Billie became the proud grandparents of a new baby granddaughter Victoria Grace, born on March 30th, but Bill lost his brother Leroy on April 6th.

Bill stays busy attending his garden of potatoes, radishes, carrots, okra, collards, mustard beets, tomatoes and peppers. Billie has him trimming the hedge every 2 weeks and mowing the lawn at least twice a week.

Billie attended an all girls of the family celebration for Sapphire who graduated from High School. They stayed at the Lyons Victorian Mansion and were treated royally in Victorian style.

Billie writes that both are “alive” and doing fairly well. They are anxiously awaiting the Melbourne Reunion.

I receive many E-mails from Helene Soloninka but no information that I can report to you. I have not heard otherwise so I suppose they are as well as can be expected.

I promised Betts Flynn that if I ever had a procedure as she did and which appeared in a Company L report, that I would make mine public also. I had a Colonoscopy, two Barium Enemas and an Endoscopy and Betts was right, the preparation is 100 times worse the procedure. As a result, I received a clean bill of health. After a lot of prodding from John Flynn, I went to the VA about my back and leg problems. The Doctor I saw there told me they had a procedure that killed the sensory nerves in the

back, which kept the pain from being transmitted to the brain. I had an appointment scheduled for April 3rd and it was canceled with no explanation. I've called and written E-mails to the PM personnel but have gotten no response. Maria has been my pillar of strength through all of this. She is a great lady.

On a sad note, I am sorry to report that Christine Cooper, wife of Walter passed away on October 21st 2001 after a long illness. I know you join me in expressing our deepest sympathy to Walter and his family on this great loss. You will be able to offer you sympathy to Walter at the Melbourne Reunion which he will attend.

Looking forward to a great reunion in Melbourne. I sincerely hope all of you reading this will be there.

Hank Einolf.

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## Co F 318 Post 46

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As this is written, we are preparing to attend the Company F reunion in New Port Rickey, Florida. At last count there appeared to be in excess of 30 attending, including sons, daughters, and grandsons of the men who fought in WWII. Paul Fate and his wife, Kathryn, have set out a program of interesting events and tours, ending with a banquet on Saturday, April 6th. Necessary deadlines prevent us from covering more on this get-together, but we'll have a complete description in the next issue.

Bob Fasnacht, Secretary

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## Greater Reading Post #32

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### THIS WAS A WRITE UP IN THE READING EAGLE.

When the local guys from the 80th Division Veterans Association get together to swap war stories, Phil Piergrossi, 81 of Hyde Park, the commander of the associations Greater Reading Post 32, shrugs his shoulders as often as not and passes the buck to someone else. "I wouldn't know anything about that" he says. "I wasn't there."

Not that Phil missed out on the war. He was one of those drafted in the summer of 1942 and assigned to the 80th Blue Ridge Division. The division's shoulder patch depicts three mountains in baby blue.

"Most of us came from just three states, PA, VA and WV, from the Blue Ridge Mountains" says former PNC Lou Shirey, 80 Reading. So many came from Berks that Greater Reading post was formed, and held national reunions in Reading.

The 80th landed on Omaha Beach a month after D-day and immediately joined the vicious fighting through the hedgerows of Normandy. It was thrown into the Argentian-Falaisle Gap, completing the encirclement and subsequent surrender of the German Seventh Army.

Phil wound up with a motorcycle and sidecar to haul supplies for his mortar battery, but field telephone operator Warren March, 81, of Birdsboro inherited a real treasure, a small easily portable, highly capable German switchboard, which was everything the American unit he'd been using wasn't.

On Sept. 15, 1944, Phil, along

with Angelo Barone of Pottsville and hundreds of others, parted ways with the rest of the division during its bloodiest engagement of the war, the crossing of the Moselle River.

"We wound up on the wrong side of the river, surrounded by Germans," Phil says. "We'd fallen into a trap."

While the rest of the division held the Luxembourg bridges during the Battle of the Bulge and spear-headed the headlong advance of Gen. George Patton's Third Army, Phil spent months living in freight cars in German railyards.

"The Americans bombed us by day and the Brits by night," he says. "The Germans were using us as human shields."

Though Phil wasn't there when the division liberated Buchenwald and Ebensee concentration camps, an experience Lou and the rest still have trouble talking about he has an idea of what they felt.

The American POW's were put to work repairing bombing damage to rail lines, and so were gangs from concentration camps wearing gold stars on their sleeves.

"They kept us separated, but we could see they were much worse off than we were," Phil says. "Occasionally, we'd be close enough to throw cigarettes to them, but the guards didn't like it. If they caught you, they gave a rifle butt in the back."

Much of what's left of the war is numbers, much fixed in time, some still subject to change.

The 15,000 man 80th division suffered 17,087 casualties in war, including 3500 KIA.

The passing of time is the culprit now. The 50 local veterans who founded the Post are now down to 17, not including and widows in the auxiliary, and most are in their 80s.

## The XII Corps Left and Center Advance on Sarreguemines

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ON 1 DECEMBER 1944 A NEW OPERATIONAL DIRECTIVE  
ALERTED THE 80TH AND 35TH INFANTRY

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Divisions and the 6th Armored Division for an attack on 4 December intended to carry the corps left and center in a limited straightening of the line. The 35th Infantry Division, theoretically the corps reserve but actually with some elements in the line, relieved CCB, 6th Armored Division, in front of Puttelange on the night of 3-4 December. The 6th Armored Division, in turn, took over a portion of the 80th Division main line of resistance. Here, on the left, XII Corps units already had broken through the main part of the Maginot Line. The general Third Army plan provided for a limited advance by the 80th Division, using one regimental combat team, to gain the commanding ground along side the Sarre northeast of Farbersviller. The 6th Armored Division was to drive toward Sarreguemines, meanwhile extending its left flank so as to pinch out the 80th Division, seize the high ground in the Cadenbronn area, and clear the west bank of the Sarre. The 35th Division, on the right of the 6th Armored, was earmarked to continue the drive along-side of the 26th Division and the

4th Armored Division once the left and center of the corps had been brought up to or cross the Sarre River.

The German troop facing the XII Corps were in poor condition to sustain an attack and were greatly outweighed in numbers and material. On the right wing of the XIII SS Corps the 36th VG Division-badly mauled but still reckoned a good division-had pulled back to the northeast. It was now stationed in the Warndt Forest area facing the 5th Infantry Division and the American cavalry detachments screening the gap between the XX and XII Corps. Opposite the 80th Division and the 6th Armored, along a front from the Rosselle River to a point just south of Puttelange, the 17th SS Panzer Grenadier Division was deployed. This division had been in almost continuous action since June 1944, and was about worn out. Numerous changes in command at all echelons and the constant admixture of untrained troops and unwilling Volksdeutsche from Eastern Europe had robbed the di-

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vision of its character as an elite reputation. On 4 December the division had a ration strength of 4000, of which only 1,700 were classed as infantry effective. South of Püttelange the 11th Panzer Division was still in the line, although numerous and peremptory orders had come down from OKW to send the division north to the Aachen area. Very heavy fighting had reduced the division to some 3,500 officers and men, but only 800 of these were armored infantry. Despite this weakness the 11th Panzer Division remained on the Wehrmacht list of "attack" divisions.

Just before daylight on 4 December the 35th Division led off in the three-division attack. An artillery preparation had denied in order to gain tactical surprise, and this decision paid off dividends.

On the left the 134th Infantry crossed the Maderbach in assault boats, encircled Püttelange, and were in possession of the city before the 17th SS outposts could offer any resistance. The German infantry were found sleeping in their foxholes and billets; the whole business was concluded so quickly and quietly that the regiment lost only one man. On the right the 320th Infantry had a stroke of bad luck when the advance guard ran into a column of German infantry moving up to relieve their outposts on the east bank of the Maderbach. Meanwhile the 2nd Battalion had crossed near Remering-les-Püttelange and started east along the main road. At the first crossroads the battalion encountered a large patch of barbed wire entanglements. While the column was halted the shelling brought down a

317<sup>th</sup> / 318<sup>th</sup> / 319<sup>th</sup>

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terrific shelling, immobilizing the battalion for several hours. While the right-wing advance was checked, the 35th Division left succeed in driving a deep salient in the German lines east of Püttelange and General Eddy ordered General Baade to continue the attack toward the Saar, supporting the 26th Division or taking over its mission if so required.

The 6th Armored Division and the 80th Infantry Division began their attack well after daylight on 4 December. An intense fire from the corps artillery, which lasted an hour and eight minutes and blasted the Germans out of their forward positions, preceded it. (On the 4 December there was 9,00 rounds fired.) On the extreme left of the corps the 80th Division put the 318th Infantry (reinforced by a company from the 702 Tank Battalion and a company from the 610th Tank Destroyer Battalion) into a limited-objective attack and took Faresberviller, which had been so tough an obstacle, for the division a few days earlier. Then the regiment drove the Germans off the hills to the northeast, rounding up 327 prisoners during the day. South of the 318th Infantry, CCA of the 6th Armored Division inaugurated an attack with dismounted infantry and supporting tank platoons to take the high ground in the vicinity of Mont de Cadenbronn. The combat command made its advance along two east-west ridges lines, easily reducing the villages in the valley with artillery and tank guns firing from the heights. Since the 318th Infantry had halted after

reaching its objective, CCA was forced to attack with its north flank in the air. Toward the end of the day one of its tank columns, which moving to encircle Cadenbronn from the north, came under flanking fire from the German 88's located beyond the range of the American tank guns and lost eight tanks.

The second day of the XII Corps attack toward the Sarre was carried by the 6th Armored Division and the 35th Division against little resistance. The remaining enemy infantry hurriedly crossed behind the Saare, and the Germans batteries displaced to safer positions. By mid-afternoon CCA patrols were on the bluffs overlooking the river north of Sarreguemines and the command had its guns ranging in on Grosbliederstroff. In the meantime the 2d Cavalry Group had moved forward along the north bank of the Rossell River, where it had been scouting on the left flank of the corps. During the day a cavalry patrol passed the German frontier near St. Nicolas, one of the first, if not the first, incursions by the XII Corps on the soil of the Third Reich. Subsequently the cavalry crossed the Rossell River near the village of Rosbruck and started east to cover CCA's open flanks.

In the 35th Division zone all battalions of the 134th and 320th Infantry Regiments put patrols along the west bank of the Sarre before dark. The 2nd Battalion of the 134th Infantry reached the southeastern

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outskirts of Sarreguemines and there began a five-day battle for control of the city. Sarreguemines, an industrial center with a prewar population of around 15,000, occupied a commanding site at the confluence of the Sarre and Blies Rivers—both of which had to be crossed during the northeastwardly advance by the XII Corps. The British and American air forces had used the city as a target for some months past because of its importance as a rail center, and as a result the German garrison had sought to protect it by building numerous concrete shelters. These shelters and many substantial factory buildings made the city a demi-fortress for troops of the 17 SS now acting as defenders. The Americans' task was made more even more difficult by the fact that Sarreguemines is built on both sides of the Sarre; one the enemy relinquished his hold west of the river he could continue the fight from buildings in the eastern part of the city, which is what it did.

CCA put a one-tank force into Sarreguemines on 6 December, although as the result of erroneous information. Colonel Haines, the CCA commander, had been told that troops of the 35th Division were in possession of the town and set off with his S-3, Lt. Col. A.N. Ward, on a liaison trip. Inside the town the single American tank received ovation from the French members of the population, but found no other Americans. Haines decided to wait until the infantry came in from the south. Eventually he made contact with the 2nd Bat-

alion of the 134th Infantry, which had arrived in the outskirts of Sarreguemines the previous evening. Light tanks then were brought in from CCA to support infantry in the fight to clear the western sector of the city. By mid-afternoon of 6th December the 6th Armored had completed the mission assigned by the XII Corps. The division would now assume a defensive role, extending its zone to the north and covering the north flank of the XII Corps between the 35th Division on the right and the XII Corps on the left. The slow advance in the autumn mud had cost the 6th Armored heavily in tanks and men; battle and combat fatigue had reduced the armored infantry in particular. The Lorraine Campaign had given little opportunity for dashing tactics and rapid movement that had characterized the 6th Armored drive across Brittany. But the division had punched and probed its way to the Sarre under conditions of terrain and weather as difficult as those any American armored division in the European Theater of Operations would be called upon to endure.

At the end of 6 December the 6th Armored and 35th Divisions held the western bank of the Sarre in force from Grosbliederstroff to Witting, a distance of about ten miles. Late in the evening General Eddy canceled the orders for the 35th Division to cross the Sarre, pushing the date ahead until 8 December when the 26th Division could be in position to attack alongside the 35th. South and east of Witting the French had build one

of the strongest sectors of the Maginot Line. The 26th Division was now in process of closing up this section of the Maginot Line, and the XII Corps commander envisaged a co-ordinated attacking which the 35th and 26th Divisions would crack the two wings of the German position, the one breaching the line on the Sarre which the other drove through the Maginot Line.

On 7 December the XII Corps regrouped for the next phase of the advance to the northeast. The 35th and 26th Division attacking abreast would make the main effort. The object was to bring the XII Corps into positions from which a final assault would be launched to penetrate the section of the German West Wall extending from Saarbruecken to Zweibruecken. The 6th Armored Division had the 2nd Cavalry Group relieved the 80th Division, which moved back to rest areas around St. Avold.



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