

Editorial Staff



Age 3



Age 17



Age 23



Age 73



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THUNDER MAIL CALL

17th Airborne post-dissolution Newsletter, Vol #10

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(The Colonel Del Townsend edition – January 2009)

The TMC editorial staff wishes you a Healthy & Happy New Year 2009.

President Colonel Delbert Townsend



President Del Townsend at our Final Reunion, and photos of his entire career through the ranks as an Army Officer, from civilian to Lieutenant, to Major, to Full Colonel.

Delbert L. Townsend, born 6 April 1921, in Norcatur, Kansas. Spent my early childhood days on a farm near Danbury, Nebraska. Graduated from Decatur Community High School in Oberlin, Kansas, in May 1938. In August 1939 I enrolled at Kansas State College and graduated in December 1942 with a degree Agriculture Economics. I entered the US Army in early January 1943. In May 1943 I was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant of Infantry and joined Company A, 194th Glider Infantry, 17th Airborne Division at Camp Mackall, North Carolina. I completed Glider training at Camp Mackall and the Parachute School at Camp Forrest, Tennessee. Shipped over to England with the 17th Airborne Division to join the war effort in Europe. On 7 January, 1945, I was wounded during the Battle of the Bulge and spent nearly two months in the hospital in England. I returned to Company A, 194th Glider Infantry just in time to make the Rhine River crossing in a CG-4A Glider in "Operation Varsity". I remained with Company A until VE Day.

With the end of the war in Europe, I transferred to the 82nd Airborne Division in June 1945 for a short tour in Berlin. I returned to the States with the 82nd Airborne for the big parade in New York City in January 1946. Following the parade I moved with the Division to Fort Bragg, North Carolina, where I spent the next five years in various airborne assignments. I accepted my Regular Army Commission in February 1947. The remainder of my military service was pretty much standard for a career officer. I completed the Advanced Infantry School, the Command and General Staff College, and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces. My school assignments were integrated into another tour of duty in Europe and Berlin, 13 months in Korea, a three year stint with the ROTC at the University of Kansas, and nearly 12 years in the Pentagon in three separate tours. I did manage to spend a year in Fort Rucker, Alabama learning how to fly an airplane and a helicopter. This was followed by two tours of duty in Vietnam with the 52nd Aviation Battalion and the 16th Aviation Group. I retired from the US Army on 1 July 1973, in the grade of Colonel, after nearly 31 years of service.

Awards include the Glider and Parachute Wings, Senior Pilot Wings, Combat Infantry Badge, and three battle stars for service in Europe. Decorations include the Silver Star, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Purple Heart, four awards of the Legion of Merit, two Bronze Stars, two Army Commendation Medals, several Air Medals, and three Vietnamese Army decorations. I completed some 68 parachute jumps and logged over 2,500 hours of flight time as a Pilot.

Following active duty and an eleven year tour in the retail sales arena, I have been active in the local Civic and Community activities. My major accomplishment to date has been the establishment of the Colonel Delbert L. Townsend Scholarship Program at the University of Nebraska Foundation and at the Kansas State University Foundation. Both programs have been completely funded and will support eight Recipients at each University on an annual basis. Each Scholarship is for eight semesters and currently provides approximately \$ 3,000.00 each year towards tuition, books, and fees, and approximately \$ 1,200.00 towards the one time purchase of a Personal Computer. Today, the pipeline is full (two Seniors, two Juniors, two Sophomores and two Freshmen) at each University. To date, 12 Townsend Scholarship Recipients have

graduated from the University of Nebraska and ten from Kansas State University.

In October 2007, I was re-elected President, 17th Airborne Division Association. Today I am serving in my fourth term as President of this World War II organization. Age and health problems are taking its toll on our Membership as we are in the final steps of the dissolving process that we hope to complete by late 2008. My service with the Association has been the highlight of my career and I will cherish the Comradery and very close knit relationship with the Membership forever.

Delbert L. Townsend, Col US Army (Ret)

COMMENTS: Welcome to our new year 2009. Colonel Del Townsend is our Association President in perpetuity by acclamation of our members, in spite of term limits. Del has been our most active, most participating and ever-present President.

In conjunction with Ed Siergiej, Colonel Del is our monitor to report news items of our sick and departed. I thank him for the regular reports he sends me to post as to the happenings among our members.

NOTE: My Platoon Leader in 194-C was 1st Lt. Clauson (KIA), and I had never met 1st Lt. Townsend when he was in 194-B. However, Colonel Townsend was the third Colonel I got to know. The first Colonel was a Colonel Glasscock who was a Camp Commander. He had wanted me to be his driver and houseboy. I was then a Private and he outranked me by eleven levels and I was truly fearful of what he might painfully do to me judging by his surname. The second was Colonel Gayle, who was the Commander of my medical training unit. Unknown to me, he had officially changed my MOS number to that of a clerk-typist so that he can keep me in his unit instead of returning me to the 17th Airborne as ordered. But, being the only Asian everywhere I had served, I got to know the Inspector General, (the "IG"), who was interested in my well-being in matters pertaining to racial bias. The IG put a stop to all that nonsense of me being a houseboy, so he made me a "medic-at-large" to serve in any unit, only in a medical capacity.

LEST WE FORGET 12 DECEMBER 1944

Message from Del Townsend

As Veterans of World War II we often live our daily lives and soon forget many of the events that were part of our lives during our Service in the war effort. One tragic event that I will never forget was the terrible Horsa Glider Crash on the Greenham Commons Air Base on 12 December 1944, some 64 years ago.

I joined A Company, 1st Battalion, 194th Glider Infantry Regiment, 17th Airborne Division at Camp Mackall, North Carolina, on 15 May 1943, as a brand new 2nd Lieutenant of Infantry. We had a small cadre of NCOs and prepared to accept the new "draftees" as they arrived by train at Hoffman, North Carolina. We completed our "Basic Training" and "Small Unit Training" there at Mackall. Glider training to include "Loading and Lashing" were completed with several Glider Flights out of Laurenburg Maxton Air Field. Several night flights and small unit maneuvers were completed. In early 1944 we moved to take part in the Tennessee Maneuvers. Following the maneuvers and "Jump School" we packed up and moved by train to Camp Miles Standish and a trip overseas on the USS Wakefield. We landed in England in August 1944 and were stationed near Swindon.

In preparation for possible commitment across the channel we continued our small unit



and glider training. We used mainly the US CG4A gliders that would carry some 13 Soldiers, a jeep and four men or a 75mm howitzer and a crew of four. Both a single tow and a double tow were used in training. As part of our training we were “cross training” with the British Horsa Glider. This was a large glider that could carry some 31 soldiers and two pilots. I completed Parachute School in Camp Forrest, Tennessee and

Members of the UK's British Royal Legion honors the Horsa Glider Casualties in 2008.

was not required to take a glider flight for pay purposes. Those individuals who did not complete jump school at Fort Benning or Tennessee were required to participate in a glider flight every three months for pay purposes.

On 12 December, 1944, 31 members of the 17th Airborne Division, (mostly from C Company, 194th GIR) gathered at the Greenham Commons Air Base for a Horsa Glider Flight for training and pay purposes. The flight ended in a horrific crash killing all 31 Members plus the two pilots. I personally knew three of the victims quite well. Major James Klock was the 194th Regimental Surgeon. During my early days at Camp Mackall Major Klock treated me for an allergy to Poison Oak and kept me from being thrown out of the Army. Chief Warrant Officer Ira Smith was an Assistant Adjutant to Capt William Hunter. Lieutenant Charles Albury was a Platoon leader in C Company, 194th GIR who I saw almost on a daily basis.

On 12 December, 1994, through the efforts of Joe Quade, 17th Pcht Maint Co and Walt Wrzeszczynski, 194th GIR Med, a Memorial there on the former Greenham Commons Air Base was dedicated to the Memory of those 33 HEROES who perished in that terrible glider crash on 12 December, 1944. We are deeply indebted to Mr Chris Green of the Royal British Legion for his leadership in the Annual Memorial Ceremonial effort. The Greenham Common Trust which now occupies and operates a major portion of what was the original Air Base where the Horsa glider crash occurred has been very active in the task of Remembrance and Perpetuating the Memory of our Fallen Heroes who perished in that crash. A major part of this effort is the naming of various streets, buildings, etc in the Business Park after the individuals who perished in the crash. 12 December, 2008, will mark the 14th Anniversary of the dedication of this Memorial

On behalf of the Membership of the 17th Airborne Division Association we would like to express our sincere Thanks and Deep Appreciation to the Royal British Legion and the Greenham Commons Trust for your continued efforts. Unfortunately, our Association is

in the final days of dissolution. While we may not be around next year to express our gratitude for your very kind remembrance:

PLEASE REMEMBER ---WE WILL NEVER FORGET

Photos submitted by Peter Lahman, of the Belgian Golden Talon Association



Photos of Peter Lahman finding the memorial to those who had fought in Belgium during the Battle of the Bulge. That battle was aptly named the “Bulge” because the German, with overwhelming force, had dented the American front line to form a huge bulge when looking down from above. Our line did not break because of our fortitude and bravery of our troops. The 17th Airborne was used to reduce the bulge to push the Germans back across the Rhine River.

Gunter G. Gillot Jr, email = vt6417673@tele2allin.be

Hello, Being an Honorary member for more than 20 years I am sending you this message to give you my new email addy for the news letter, as well as to wish the all the best seasons greetings from Belgium to America.

This may sound like a lot of people but as time goes by lot of our veterans are going to the Heroe's field and it is really difficult to send a greetings to someone particularly. Anyway, don't worry about the future as we will fight to keep the souvenir alive till we pass it to our children. Best for 2009

REPLY: Gunter, I thank you for your message. However, your new email address is not accepted by my computer system and your other (older) email address is too full to take more messages.

Please come back to me with a corrected address. Thanks.

QUESTION

Why was a Second Lieutenant referred to by higher ranked officers as a "Shaved Tail"?

Answer: In the old Cavalry, the trained mules had their tails shaved to distinguish them from the untrained mules. OK, Lieutenant, Here's your gold bars, now bend over! Which also meant that we enlisted troopers were all untrained mules, or jackasses.

ADVISE FROM A MEDIC AT LARGE.

From birth until I went into the army, I had never had a doctor, and had there been one, we could not have afforded one. I had never had any childhood inoculations, except smallpox, only because it was requirement for attending public school. Whenever I became ill, my mother had always rubbed Tiger Balm ointment all over my body part that ailed me, and I usually recovered from my illness the very next day. Tiger Balm was considered to be the "Penicillin" of my youth. Tiger Balm was the ancient Chinese equivalent of today's Vick's Vapo Rub ointment. It is entirely possible that Vick Vapo-Rub could have done the same cure.

After the incidence of blood blots in my lung in January 2008, I now tend to cough a bit more, especially during the pollen allergy seasons, when my coughing usually woke me from my sleep. So, I rubbed some Vick's Vapo Rub onto the sole of my feet and wore socks before going to bed and I slept through the night and coughed only once, only after I had arisen for the day. With winter coming on, please try the Vick's or Tiger Balm should you develop a cough that would not go away . Warning, If you were to rub Vick's all over your body, your wife will force you to sleep out in the hallway.

Message from Military.Com

Dear Sirs: I'm writing in regards to my brother-in-law who was in the 17th airborne and injured in 1945 between Hamminkeln and Wesel. (Operation Varsity) His name is **James C. Hayward, 810 W. Tamarack Ave. Hermiston, OR.** I understand there was a German man by the name of Johann J. Nitrowski who wrote a book entitled OPERATION VARSITY. I was wondering if you know how I might get a copy or a contact person that could help me. Jim is still alive and elderly, and has no computer. Any help would be appreciated. Thnx, Chuck Brainard

Comment: The above message was received by way of Military.Com, which does not give out email addresses. To date, Chuck Brainard has not responded to my response to Military.Com for him to contact me. I do recall Flory and Joe Somers telling me about a Mr. Nitrowski's book that was written in German, but the years kept rolling along such that my memory did not survive the time-lapse.

If Mr. Brainard, by the remotest of chance, gets to read this message, please contact me at <kn6qd@ARRL.net>

At the 1990 Washington DC Reunion



Mike & Evelyn Haupt

Ollie Hawkins

Ed & Loreda Haynes

Jim & Joyce Haynie & Laura
Estupin



Junior & Freda Hedrick (Gold Star
Brother)

Tony & Betty Heigl

John & Vivian Hellmann

Charles & Gene Henkey



Don & Dorothy Henry

Russ & Norma Heriford

Don & Annetta Herring

Arthur & Mae Herst



Ernestine Hess

Dale & Margaret Heuer

Harry & Diana Hill

Ralph & June Hill



Bob & Jan Holdsworth

Jim & Mavee Hoover

John & Mary Horvath

Fred & Mildred Houtz

National Infantry Museum Paver Program

There are countless occasions to say "thank you" to a Soldier. Your donation of \$250 reserves a 4"x8" granite paver with space for three lines of text. You also will receive a miniature replica of the paver to place on your or a loved one's desk. Additional replicas can be purchased for \$25 each. Orders received by January 30, 2009, will be installed along Heritage Walk in time for the museum's grand opening in March 2009.



ORDER FORM

Please place your order for 4"x8" Engraved Granite Pavers below.

Pavers are \$250 each and include one free 2"x4" miniature replica.

Orders received by January 30, 2009, will be installed along Heritage Walk in time for the museum's grand opening in March 2009.



1 Dec 08: Judith Apple, daughter of Oliver Apple (193-D - deceased)

Bill: Thanks for running my request for contact from anyone who knew my dad (Oliver Apple 17th) its great that you keep the news, and memories of these guys, and their experiences, alive. I did not get the photos to you in time for this newsletter, but would still like to send them for the next one. when will the next newsletter go out? Hope all is well. Blessings to you and yours.

Judith Apple

REPLY: Judy: The TMC newsletter is published once a month, if there are sufficient news or letters. Hope you had a good Thanksgiving Day or weekend. You can send me the photo to print in the January issue. Bill

NOTE: No photo received to print.

513-D Company lives on as reenactors in Belgium



Handsome 513-D men reenactors of Belgium



Beautiful 513-D Reenactor Ladies in Belgium

The 513-F Company Lives on in the The Czech Republic



The Czech Republic 513-F reenactors, in combat mode, waiting for the panzers.



Czech Republic 513-F (reenactors) after destroying the German SS Panzers brigade.

I like this idea of adults playing soldiers—better than sitting on the couch with the potatoes, and everybody survives at the end of the “war”, and you go home to real food instead of D or K rations.

2 Dec 08: Colin and Ian Dewey. Dear Bill, Thank you for the latest newsletter, a good read once again. Just to keep you informed, we were in Luxembourg last weekend doing a photo-shoot. While we were there we visited your memorial at Hosingen. This time we laid a British Poppy wreath on your Associations behalf, as a mark of respect from us to you guys. Our very best regards, Colin and Ian Dewey

UK 17th Airborne Reenactors' visitation to Luxembourg.



Above photos = 17th Airborne Memorial in Hosingen, Luxembourg; The UK reenactors cozied up to our Memorial Monument during their visit.

Thanks guys, for your continuing adoration of ourselves, of what we were 63 years ago, since we can now no longer fit into our uniforms. We would also need canes or walkers too.

UK reenactors as the 504th PIR, 82nd Airborne.

UK Reenactor Group's visitation to Luxembourg.

Little known fact was that the 17th Airborne Division was diverted to Luxembourg towards the end of the **Battle of the Bulge** to push the Germans back across the Rhine River in the **Battle for the Rhineland**, which was the second battle star earned by the 17th Airborne . The 17th's constant pressure and aggressive patrolling caused the enemy to retreat to the Our River. On 18 January, the Division relieved the 11th Armored Division at Houffalize, and pushed the enemy remnants from the Bulge, and seized Wattermal and Espeler, 26 January. Coming under the III Corps, the 17th turned south toward Luxembourg, taking Eschweiler and Clervaux and clearing the enemy from the west bank of the Our River. Aggressive patrols crossed the river to probe the Siegfried Line defenses and established a limited bridgehead near Dasburg before being relieved by the 6th Armored Division on 10 February. During that phase of battle, my good friend, **Charles Renner, 139-C**, was severely wounded by a sniper in the leg (later amputated), and where **Lt. Leary** sacrificed his life to save his men, at the Our River. After the 17th Airborne was withdrawn to France to prepare for Operation Varsity, Bill Tom was retained as a medic-at-large to serve in the US 9th Army as it battled the Germans into the Roer River Valley to clear the Germans from Rhineland and from the west bank of the Rhine River, before the Operation Varsity could begin.

On 23rd March 1945, the major crossing of the Rhine River had begun that night. The British 2nd Army, the US 9th, 1st, 3rd, 7th Armies, and the French 1st Army all crossed the Rhine River at the same time. The next morning, the British 6th and the US 17th Airborne Divisions were dropped by parachutes and gliders to land behind the German Army that had caused the US 9th and 1st Armies to effectively surround the Ruhr Valley pocket to capture the bulk of the main Germany army of 300,000 men assigned to defend the Ruhr region that contained most of the manufacturing capacity of Germany.

Meanwhile, the US 3rd Army under Patton went straight for the southeast corner of Germany where we suspected the Germans would put up a battle to the end defending the Berchesgarten where Hitler was to hide. The US 9th Army (estimated at one million strong) was diverted from the Rhine to head straight for Berlin to join in Operation Eclipse when our airborne troops were to drop into the two airports in Berlin in conjunction with the US 9th army attacking on land. President Roosevelt died on April 12th and President Truman was not too keen to lose the estimated 100,000 to 300,000 of our troops to take Berlin. He let the Russians take that loss, which they did. Meanwhile, the medical unit to which I was assigned, overran the 9th army spearhead in the night, to end up captured by a German SS Panzers brigade near the Elbe River. I, and our entire medical unit, were held captives for about six hours, until relieved by the oncoming spearhead of the US 9th Army tank destroyers. Bill Tom

25 Dec 08: Mrs Carole Bond, daughter of **Glen Morrow (681-A)** and his wife, Virginia Morrow, submitted this photo in honor of her parents on this Christmas Day, 2008, and in loving memory of her dad who had departed this world only three weeks earlier. Glen Morrow's obituary is published on page 24 this issue.



14 Dec 08: **Frederic DeHon, Director/Golden Talon of Belgium.**

Those are some pictures I took today during the ceremony at your monument at Flamierge. I'll send more comment for the "TFH". Take good care of you. Fred,

Frédéric DEHON, Golden Talon Belgian Association



17th Memorial at Flamierge



Frederic with Gailbreath, 506/101 Airborne.

From Colonel Townsend.

PS As most of you know I spent my entire time in the 17th Airborne Division with either Co A or B. I soldiered with Sgt Ed Coleman, the cook. As many of you know the "Kitchen staff" carried the Company Officers Bed Rolls. I share my "Bed Roll" story with you.

WORLD WAR II WAR TIME STORIES

Each of us in our own special way can reflect back upon our World War II experiences and recall many events that we will carry to our graves. In general, many of those activities were very sad occasions that bring tears to our eyes as we relive those precious moments. Some, however, were hilarious and often bring tears of joy as we reminisce with our comrades of many years ago. If I may, I would like to relate one such joyous incident that I will never forget.

Lt. Del Townsend and his Bed Roll (A True Wartime Story)

I joined Company A, 1st Battalion, 194th Glider Infantry Regiment, 17th Airborne Division at Camp Mackall, North Carolina in May 1943. I was a brand new 2nd Lieutenant fresh out of Officer Candidate School. Sgt Edgar B Coleman, our Mess Sergeant, was with the original Cadre for the 17th Airborne. The basic troops were "draftees" just 18 years of age. They arrived at Hoffman, NC on troop trains and all in civilian clothes. We issued them uniforms and started our basic training. It seems like I bounced around between A and B Company but never very far from Sgt Coleman. Except for training in the field we had a Battalion Mess facility instead of the Company Mess. We survived basic training and the Tennessee Maneuvers and shipped over to England in August 1944.

During all of our training, in the States and in England, Sgt Coleman took care of the Company Officers' bed rolls. He carried them in the one ton and a half Kitchen Trailer. My bed roll was the normal issue canvass job that I normally carried with extra socks, fatigues, tee shirts & shorts and maybe a pair of boots. On very special occasions there might be a bottle of "booze" buried deep somewhere in my bed roll for those events. Now for a true story concerning "my bed roll" that has been under wraps for over 61 years.

In late December 1944 the 17th Airborne Division moved across the English Channel. Hitler was kicking up his heels and making a move on Bastogne. After landing in France and moving up to the front in "Cattle Trucks" we knew we were getting ready for our first combat action. In early January our Battalion (1st Bn 194th Glider Infantry) was put in a reserve position. Oh yes Sgt Coleman had my bed roll in the kitchen trailer. On 6 January our unit moved into position for our very first ground attack early on the morning of 7 January 1945. The temperature was hovering around the mid 20s with 8 to 10 inches of snow on the ground.

We jumped off on the attack about daylight on 7 January. Lt Thayer's Platoon and my Platoon were the lead units. By mid morning a German tank some distance to our front had us stopped cold. Our radios did not work because of the cold weather. Lt Wright did not want to go back up the hill to get help from our Company Executive Officer, Lt Jennings. I volunteered and took off on the dead run. Possibly two hours later Lt Jennings was killed and I was seriously wounded. I spent a couple of days in the Hospital Evacuation system. Unknown to me our Company had severe casualties. I believe that three of the six officers were killed and the other three of us were wounded. By midnight that night there were only about 20 men left in our Company. Combat casualties were tough but the main culprit was the cold weather and frost bite.

After a couple of days I wound up in a General Hospital in Paris. Much to my surprise a few days later I was moved by train and ship to a Hospital in England. After nearly two months in the Hospital I worked a deal to get back to my unit, the 17th Airborne Division, in France rather than going through the Replacement Depot System. I managed to get back to the Company possibly around the 15 of March 1945.

After stumbling around the area in the dark I ran into Sgt Coleman. What a joyous meeting. We headed for his kitchen to get caught up on all the details that I had missed since 7 January. I was the only Officer to return to the Company. After much conversation I told Sgt Coleman, "I hope you enjoyed those two bottles of booze that I had stashed away in my bed roll." Sgt Coleman looked me with that deadpan expression then motioned for me to follow him. We walked out to the kitchen trailer, tossed out a couple of items, and there in plain sight was my bed roll. We quickly unrolled that "dude" and found the two prize items. Needless to say a couple of hours later there were two serious "drunks" in the kitchen tent area.

No one would ever believe that Sgt Coleman carried my bed roll around for nearly three months not knowing whether or not I was dead or alive or if I would ever return to the Company. This incident is a true story and is just the "tip of the iceberg" on the bond between Sgt Coleman and myself. Believe me these are the memories that I will carry to my grave.

Del Townsend
Co A & B, 194th GIR
17th Airborne Division Association
President, 2004 / 2008

2 Dec 08: Joe Hatfield <joehatfield@bresnan.net>
subject John E. Smith (193-AT/194-AT GIR)

Bill, Hello. My name is Joe Hatfield and my great-Uncle, John E. Smith was a glider trooper with the 193/194th GIR. I have been putting together as much information as I can regarding his service with the 17th Airborne Division and I am respectfully asking the group for any information or remembrances they may have of Johnny. Unfortunately, he passed away some time ago and he didn't really like to talk about his service during the War. I am, therefore, limited in what I have to work with. I would love to hear from anyone who remembers serving with Johnny and would welcome any stories or information they may have.

I don't know what company he was in, but he may be remembered by two nicknames he was said to have had while in the Army -- Smitty and Old Man. He turned 33 shortly after being drafted out of Springfield, Ohio and was probably one of the oldest enlisted men in the unit. He was a master plumber in civilian life and married to Mary Smith (known as Toody). I would greatly appreciate any assistance in my quest.

Johnny liked to take photos, but most of what I have are pictures of his fellow troopers and very few of Johnny himself. If anyone is interested in getting a copy of any of his photos, I have a list of names of those he photographed. The handwriting has faded a bit over the years, so I sincerely apologize if I have misspelled any of the names:

Backarick, Nardick, Zarutski, Hobart, McGarvey, Garno, Larson, Gettler, Lockman, Stevens, Moncress, Pajak, Speck, Placek, Austrop, Harmen, DeMaglio, Turon



Thank you for including this in the newsletter and please let me know if you require any additional information. Joe at joehatfield@bresnan.net, 407 N 7th Street, Grand Junction, CO 81501

Joe, From your list of names, **Backarick, Nardick, Zarutski, Hobart, McGarvey, Garno, Larson, Gettler, Lockman, Stevens, Moncress, Pajak, Speck, Placek, Austrop, Harmen, DeMaglio, Turon**, There were many Larson still living, but only Don Placek is

still alive. He is at 1240 Landover Road, Baltimore, MD 21237. . He and your uncle were in 193-AT. The 193 and 194 had lost so many men in the Battle of The Bulge, that the 193 was combined into the 194 to form one glider regiment. AT = anti-tank. That is why he was listed in both regiments.

COMMENT: After the San Antonio reunion in 2006, Linda and I were on a two-engine jet plane headed for Salt Lake City. One of our engine failed and the plane was unable to gain altitude over the Rocky Mountains. We had to make an emergency landing at Grand Junction. We were stranded there for several hours awaiting another plane to bring us to SLC. When we arrived at SLC, our connecting flight back to San Francisco had already left, but our next flight was ready to leave. We had to run the ¾ mile from our arrival gate to the departure gate. We will never forget Grand Junction where there were many fire engines and ambulances at our landing site, anticipating us to crash.

simon@lerenfort.fsnet.co.uk

Dear Bill & Linda, Thank you once again for your sterling efforts in producing issue #9. May I wish you and those you hold dear a very Happy Christmas and an outstanding 2009.

With kind Regards from this side of the pond. Simon.

REPLY: Thank you, Simon. We wish you the same in return. We normally host our immediate family of 17 with a prime rib roast on Christmas eve at our home, and my older son usually host our entire family clan of 40 to an all-you-can-eat cook-it-yourself dinner at his home. Much to do and much to eat.

27 Nov 08: George Hawley, Our Silent Key Paratrooper.



1st Lt. George Hawley (464-PFA) made his final jump this day to become a silent key, as well. A "Silent Key" is an amateur radio operator term of someone, who can no longer send Morse Code with his telegraph key.

George was an Amateur Radio operator with call sign W9NC. He was a member of the **17th Airborne Radio Net** with Warner Johnson, NI2K, Jess Smith, K5DDT (deceased), and Bill Tom, KN6QD.

George died today at age 93 at the veterans nursing home. George was a 1st. Lieutenant in his artillery battalion, proudly nicknamed the "Brannagan's Bastards" in the 17th Airborne. He made fame when he had neglected to hook up to his static line before he jumped, but to have survived by using his reserve chute. After he landed, he chopped off the end of his static line buckle and brought it home after the war. He proudly hung that buckle on his wall at home (between he and Bill on the wall) to remind himself of how close he was to the edge of Eternity on 24 March 1945.

NOTE:

I submit condolences to George Hawley's daughter, Jacqueline, for the loss of her dad, as well as to Marie, his caretaker. George and I had served in different capacities in the 17th Airborne Division in World War II. He was a Lieutenant of Parachute Artillery and I as a medic. I initially met him on the Amateur Radio band. I recalled in our invasion of Germany across the Rhine River in Operation Varsity, it was discovered that our plans had been leaked to the Germans. The order then was for paratrooper and gliders to drop from a low 400 feet to avoid anti-aircraft flaks, and that the reserve parachute was not needed since there was not enough time for it to deploy. George wisely ignored that order and his reserve parachute saved his life; otherwise he would have left us in March 24, 1945. Warner Johnson and I will have missed knowing him.

Our army division had a reunion at Orlando, FL, many years ago, and I made it an important point to visit with George Hawley to meet him as a fellow troopers and as a fellow Ham Radio operator. We became close friends, even though we live 3,000 miles apart, but our hearts and minds were always as one. George Hawley is now a "Silent Key" in our Ham Radio vocabulary, since he is now no longer operating his Morse Code key. With much sadness from Bill Tom and Warner Johnson.

Robert Blethrow, son of Harry Blethrow (155-D) email = <rtb_60@sbcglobal.net>

Good day Mr. Ed Siergiej,

My dad, Harry B. Blethrow, Jr. was in the 17AB 155AA Company D during WWII. He passed away at a young age, 57, in 1991. I know that my mom used to receive a newsletter years ago but no longer receives it. She will celebrate her 80th B'day this month. Can I enter a subscription for her, in my dad's honor? Please advise.

My son and I had the great honor of meeting my dad's company Sgt. a few years ago, Bob Brooks from Newport Beach, CA. He gave us some insight into the experiences he and my dad shared during the war.

Sincerely, Robert Blethrow, cell: 714 767-9172



Harry Blethrow, Jr.

Dear Bob, (from Ed Siergiej) Sorry for the delay in responding to you but we had some emergency health problems on Dec. 4th and I am just now catching up on the accumulated e-mail messages. The final issue of our bulletin, Thunder From Heaven, was published in March, 2008. Our Association has been officially dissolved following our final reunion in October of 2007. Your mother was on our mailing list for a period of time but our mailing was returned, marked "unable to forward". I presume she moved to a new location and perhaps neglected to notify us. We do have an e-mail version titled THUNDER MAIL CALL, edited by Bill Tom to whom I am forwarding this message. He has produced several issues (one per month) and I'm certain you

will find them most interesting. You may wish to contact him directly and let him know of your interest. Keep us posted... From **Ed Siergiej**.

Battle of the Bulge Memorial at Fort Miley, S. F.

At 11 AM, December 13, 2008, the Golden Gate Chapter of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge commemorated the start of the Battle of the Bulge on 16 December 1944. The featured speakers were the Consul of Belgium, **Rita Bral**; the Consul of Luxembourg, **Georges Faber**; and our own **Kerry MacLaughlin, Gold Star Son of Howard MacLaughlin (513-B/MIA-KIA)**, who spoke of his dilemma of not having ever met his father and had no knowledge of his whereabouts, but ultimately found comfort in



Kerry MacLaughlin, Consul Bral, 3rd Army Nurse, Consul Faber & the editor.

finding his father's name on the "Wall of the Missing" at Margraten. Both of the Consuls spoke well of our sacrifice that led to their freedom being restored and to acknowledge and thanked us for our tremendous loss of our young men. Miss Bral emotionally wept and choked-up as she related the story of our young men sacrificing their lives to restore freedom for her Belgium.

Comment: In anticipation of the rain clouds sitting offshore that day, the meeting was held in the VA Medical Center Auditorium; however, it was a gorgeous day until after the completion of our meeting. The rain came and was on and off for several days following. However, it was ice-storms in our Mid-West states. A reminder: Fort Miley was named after our General Miley's father, Major John Miley, who designed the fortifications that defended the Golden Gate entrance into San Francisco Bay. The army

nurse had served in the 103rd Evacuation Hospital attached to General George Patton's 3rd Army, and was the primary medical facility supporting the 3rd Army which included the 17th Airborne Division, at the Bulge. The 113th Evacuation Hospital was assigned to support the 17th Airborne at Operation Varsity.

17 Dec 08: **Robert Blethrow** rtb_60@sbcglobal.net, **son of Harry B. Blethrow (155-D)**



Thanks for these updates, Bill. Today is my mom, Gloria's, 80th B'day. I will keep sharing these wonderful messages with her. My dad died at a very early age, 57, back in 1981. He was with the 17th in Bastogne, 155AAA, Co. D. I know that he was honored with 3 Bronze Star awards during WWII. He was a very humble man who did not speak much of the war.

However, he felt great pride for this nation and for all of the heroes, like yourself, who he served with during that most difficult hour for our nation and world. May God continue to bless you and your family at Christmas and always. Sincerely, Robert Blethrow

p.s. I do know that my dad returned to the states on the Queen Mary, at least according to Robert "Bob" Brooks, the sergeant in his unit whom my son and I had the great honor of meeting a few years ago in Newport Beach, CA. I believe that Bob has since passed on to Glory.

PHOTO. The Queen Mary, now a museum in dry-dock at Long Beach, CA, the ship that had also returned the 17th Airborne Division from Europe after the end of war.

COMMENT: Yes, Robert Brooks has passed into his Eternity.

SICK Call

About 10:30 AM this morning (3 December) I received a very distressed phone call from **Mr. Ed Siergiej**. He had been attempting to phone me several times on his cell phone but could not get through because of the "Dead Spots". The sad news is the **Mary Siergiej** fell last night (apparently at home) and fractured her hip. Ed called me from Mary's room in the Shands Hospital and indicated that she would be going into **Surgery** within minutes.

On the Web Site I found the following information on the Shands Hospital:

Shands at the University of Florida Shands at UF is one of the most comprehensive **hospitals** and one of the leading **referral ... 1600 S.W. Archer Road • Gainesville, FL 32608 • 352.265.8000 ...** <http://www.shands.org/hospitals/UF/>

4 Dec 08: **Mary Siergiej** was able to answer the telephone on day 2 after her surgery, and she might return to home in 3 days..

The good news is that **Mary** will probably be discharged next Monday, 8 December or shortly thereafter. She will go to a "**Rehab**" center there in the Retirement Community where they live in Dowling Park. Her discharge will depend upon a vacancy there at the Rehab Center in Dowling Park. As I understand the Hospital in Gainesville is some 75 to 80 miles from Dowling Park.

Mary had entered the Rehab facility in their Dowling Park Retirement Complex. I

believe the facility is only about two blocks from the Siergiej Residence. Latest report was that Mary is participating successfully in her post-operative rehabilitation therapy exercises.

Mr. Ray Kearns, Co D, 513th PIR. The message I received from Ray's Wife, Jean, is as follows: "Thank you for the status Report on Mary Siergiej's condition. We sincerely wish for her a speedy and successful recovery. We have so enjoyed meeting and being with Ed and Mary over the years at the reunions.

Ray has just been released from the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston after suffering from temporary blackouts. He was in ICU for 6 days but returned home yesterday. He was suffering from Dysrhythmia/Coronary Artery Disease and is sporting a heart monitor for the next month as a precaution. He is feeling better but needs to rest. He did have the "fun" of being sent by helicopter from the Beaufort Hospital to MUSC.

Sadly, we had another heart ache this week. My sister, Mary Henrikson of Charleston, SC, died after an 11 year battle with Alzheimer's. Such a horrible and sad disease. She was the second of my sister's to pass away this year, my older sister June, of Savannah, Ga, having died of the same disease on January 1st.

Our very best to all our friends in the 17th Airborne Association and especially to Mary and Ed who have devoted so many, many years to the Association."

Jean and Ray Kearns (first name Ralph but never uses it) Company D, 513th Parachute Infantry. I am certain that the Kearns Family would enjoy hearing from friends and Comrades. Correspondence and "Get Well" messages may be addressed to the Kearns Family as follows: Mr. Ray Kearns, 2511 Hermitage Rd, Beaufort, SC 29902. E-mail raykearns@AOL.COM

Our thoughts and prayers are with the "Kearns" and "Siergiej" Families for a quick recovery of their loved ones. Sincerely, Del Townsend

NOTE: To Ray and Jean, Linda and I spent a whole day in Beaufort looking at the beautiful homes in your lovely city after our Columbus, GA reunion. Mentally, we purchased two of the old homes we liked so much, but we couldn't have afforded them anyway.

Reply from Ray: Thanks for the good wishes. I am improving every day. Had a scare with my heart getting out of rhythm but, after spending 6 days in ICU the doctors decided that I did not need a pacemaker or a defibrillator, just some adjusting on his medications. The best thing to come out of all this was that when I was first ill and at the Beaufort Memorial Hospital they decided I needed I to see a heart specialist so they sent me to the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston by helicopter! I was sick then and when I get the bill for the ride I will probably have a relapse. I have a private pilot's license but had never ridden in a helicopter.

COMMENT: Fortunately, you were not evacuated by glider as during the war. Taking off was traumatic, but the landing was almost brutal.

On 27 October 2008 **Mrs. Annie Ruth Paul** moved into an Assisted Living Apartment in Baton Rouge. About the same time she developed very serious back and leg problems and is currently under going medical treatment. She indicated the she is unable to walk and of course cannot drive. She has discontinued her E-mail service.

With her permission I offer the following:

**Mrs. Annie Ruth Paul, 5445 Government St, Apt # 338
Baton Rouge, LA 70806, Cell Phone 225-721-2778**

Our thoughts and prayers are with Mrs. Annie Ruth Paul for a very speedy recovery. She asked that I convey HOLIDAY GREETINGS to all as she has not been able to prepare cards and letters for Christmas mailing.

Dr. K. M. Hansen

“ COL: Thanks for the news on Mary, Jean my wife of 66 yrs. went through rehab in 1993 & 1994 walked out both times and made me her cane and or walker. She remained ambulatory until 2005 Since then it has been slowly down hill. She is on feeding tube still recognizes us and can answer simple questions with simple answers. They have her on Airicept for alzhiemers Holidays are not the same but glad to be here. Wish You a happy holiday season” It is always a sad note to have a loved one receiving "**Special Care**" at any time much less the **Holiday Season**. I am certain that the **Hansen Family** would enjoy hearing from their Friends and Comrades. **Dr Kenneth M. Hansen, 4023 North Main St, Kansas City, MO 64116**

E-mail = kenhansendds@aol.com

Ed Coleman, 194-A, was the Mess Sergeant for Co A, 1st Battalion, 194th Glider Infantry. Ed was with the Company from Activation until De-activation. The "Greeting Card" brought the sad news that Ed has been "Bed Ridden" with Shingles. Many of you know that Shingles is a follow on virus caused by Chicken Pox. Ed has been bed ridden since last August. In my discussion with Ed today he is in serious constant pain. He attended our "Farewell Reunion" in Hampton Virginia in October 2008. I am certain that the Coleman's would enjoy hearing from you. The Address for the Coleman's is as follows: Mr. Edgar Coleman, 4904 W Churchill Ct, Muncie, IN 47304-5319 , **E-mail edgar.coleman@gmail.com**

PS As most of you know I spent my entire time in the 17th Airborne Division with either Co A or B. I soldiered with Sgt Ed Coleman period. As many of you know the "Kitchen" carried the Company Officers Bed Rolls. My I share my "Bed Roll" story with you.

OBITUARY

Mr. Howard F Gieringer, Hq 507th PIR passed away on 9 August 2008.

Following his service in World War II, **Mr. Gieringer** was involved in a commercial business (**Cincinnati Time Recorder Co**) with his brother. He served there as the Vice President and the head of the Export Business. Prior to retiring from his brother's Company **Mr Gieringer** purchased and operated a small **Automobile Service Station**. He owned a small boat and was too busy to use it so he put it up for sale there at his Service Station. A boat sale was made and the Service Station evolved into a full scale Marina Business that he operated for over 30 years.

In their retirement the **Gieringer's** loved to fish , travel and play golf. **Mr Gieringer** joined our Association in 1988 and became a Life Member in 1994. The cause of death was complications from Spinal Neck Surgery at the age of 90 in August 9, 2008..

Howard was a devoted husband of Betty Gieringer (nee Brady). He was a loving father of Terri (Mike) Brunsman and Jerry Klopp. A dear grandfather of Jackie (John) Randolph, Michael and Megan Sturgeon, Sherri, Chris and Rachel Brunsman. Great grandpa of Ashley and Stephanie Randolph. Correspondence and messages of Condolence may be sent to **Mrs Betty Gieringer, 7512 State Route 128, P.O. Box 36**

Miamitown, OH 45041

1 December 2008: **Mrs. Nancy L. Kincaid**, Widow of **Mr. Joseph F Kincaid, 193-HQ1** passed away on 30 November 2008. **Mr. Kincaid** passed away in 1998

Following his service in World War II **Mr Kincaid** entered the career field as a "**Baker**". **Mrs Nancy Kincaid** entered the career field as a **Lazar Operator**. Following their retirement the **Kincaid's** loved to travel and enjoyed the several Airborne Reunions they attended. **Nancy** was a Member of the **Ladies Auxiliary** . The cause of death was Lung Cancer at the age of 82.

Nancy was born October 1, 1926, in Arkansas and passed away November 30, 2008, in Lancaster, California. Nancy moved from Arkansas to California to work in Defense Plants for the World War II. She was a member of the, (VFW - American Legion - 17th Airborne). She helped build the electrical circuits on the Apollo Aircraft and Moon Car. Nancy was a Wife, Mother, Grandmother, and Great Grandmother. She is survived by her son - Michael; daughter - Vicky; grandsons - Tyler & Ryan; great grandson - Adian; brother - James Chidester; and his wife - Joan; and cousin - Jenny. Her biggest joy in her life was her family.



Mrs Nancy Kincaid is survived one Son, two grandchildren

and one great grandchild. Correspondence and messages of Condolence may be addressed to the **Kincaid Family** as follows: **Mr. Mike Kincaid, 2050 Astor CT, Lancaster, CA 93536, E-mail kincaid29@verizon.net (Son's Address)**

Mr. George T Hawley (464-HQ), passed away on 27th November 2008. Following his service in World War II Mr. Hawley was trained as an Electrical Engineer and was employed by the Bell Laboratory. He retired after more than 35 years of service. In retirement Mr Hawley was an avid "Ham Radio Participant". He was one of just four members of the 17th Airborne Division Association that Bill Tom, THUNDERMAILCALL Editor had organized into a very close knit Ham Radio Net. group. The cause of death was Natural Causes at the age of 93.

George Hawley was born on April 11, 1915, and passed away at the Baldomero Lopez State Veterans Nursing Home in Land O' Lakes, FL. In World War II, he had served as a First Lieutenant in the 17th Airborne Division with the 464th Airborne Artillery Battalion. He had worked as an electrical engineer with Bell Labs in West Orange, NJ. He retired to New Port Richey, FL in 1983.

George had joined the 17th Airborne Amateur Radio Net and had had weekly radio contacts with Warner Johnson in New York, Jess Smith in Texas and Bill Tom in San Francisco. He had also joined the Gulf Coast Amateur Radio Club, as well as the St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church and the VFW. His wife, Alice, predeceased him, and he is survived by his son, Jonathan, Daughter Jacqueline, son-in-law Jody Gray and granddaughter Jennifer.

Correspondence may be addressed to **Mrs. Jacqueline Hawley, 23 West 82nd St, Apt#4E, New York, NY 10024**



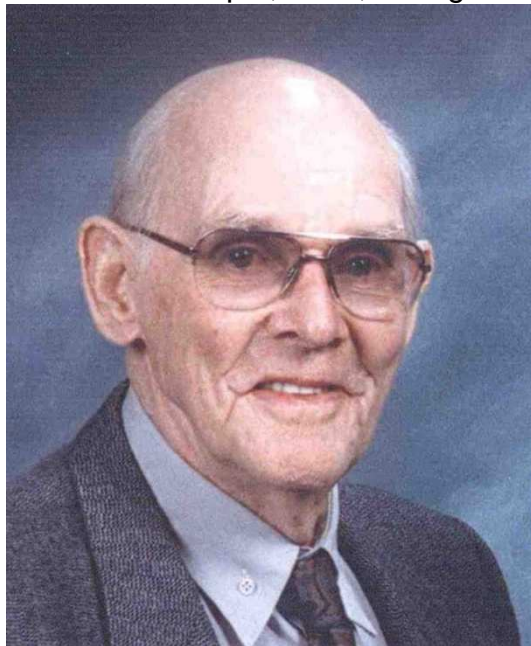
A recent photo displaying love of daughter for her dad as demonstrated by Jacqueline.

COMMENT: I met George Hawley on Amateur Radio many years ago. I made it a point to meet George in person in Florida when our division had a reunion in Orlando. We met and became close friends from 3,000 miles apart. I have maintained contact with George by communications with Jacqueline and with George's care taker, Marie, during the years of his disability.

Robert P. Wisotzke, 17th Pcht Maint Co passed away on 6 December 2008. Through those messages I was able to contact the family in Rochester , New York. Following his service in World War II, **Mr. Wisotzke** was employed by **Taylor Instruments** as a **Production and Inventory Control Superintendent**. He retired after some 26 years of service. In retirement the **Wisotzke's** enjoyed family outings, sporting events and travel with special emphasis on the 17th Airborne Reunions. Equally important was their trip back to Europe to retrace his route during World War II. **Mr. Wisotzke** joined our Association in 1985 and was an Annual Dues Paying Member until the very end. The **Wisotzke's** attended some 16 Annual Reunions. The cause of death was multiple organ failure at the age of 84. He was born on Christmas Day 1923.

Mr. Glen Morrow, A Btry, 681th GFA passed away on 3 December 2008 Following his service in World War II, Glen worked in various career fields in the States of Iowa and Missouri. The latest of his employment fields was with the Department of Transportation, The State of Iowa for some 18 years.. Following his Retirement, The Morrow's owned an RV and loved to travel ---their major "Retirement Hobby". In his later years Mr Morrow development some serious health problems. He joined our Association in 1983 and became a Life Member in 1988. The cause of death was major Lung problems at the age of 90 years.

Glen Russell Morrow, 90, passed away Wednesday, December 3, 2008, in his Sparta home. He was born March 9, 1918, in Modale , Iowa the son of Wrex and Jessie Morrow. On September 21, 1940, he married the love of his life, Virginia Hammer, also of Modale. In April, 1943, during World War II Glen was drafted into the United States



Army. He proudly served with the 17th Division and 101ST Airborne Division in Europe, including action in the Battle of the Bulge and the invasion of Hitler's Hideout in Austria .

Glen was an Iowa farmer, an International Harvester salesman and retired from Iowa D.O.T. after 18 years of employment. After retirement, he and Virginia enjoyed many happy years of traveling together throughout the U.S. Glen was a charter member of Modale American Legion, a member of Missouri Valley Christian Church and the First Christian Church of Palestine , Texas where they resided for 13 years. He loved hunting, fishing, woodworking and was an avid reader.

He is lovingly survived by his wife of 68 years, Virginia; daughter, Carole Bond of Sparta ; eight

grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren, several nieces, nephews, other family members and caring friends.

Mrs. Virginia Morrow

135 W Terrace Ct

Sparta, MO 65753

E-mail ccredbond@centurytel.net (Daughter's address)

Our 155 Anti-Aircraft connecting file is George Hudicka, 155-F, who reported the passing of **Carlton F Zoschke (155-B)** who left us on 13 July 2008, and who had fought cancer for five years before he died. After service, he worked for Bell Aerospace as a Technical Illustrator. Carlton had done extensive research on maps, flights of jump and tow planes and gliders was so thorough that he recorded 21,692 troopers, 1696 planes and 1346 gliders were involved as the largest airborne operation of the war. He also had a large collection of every book written about airborne troops. Mrs. Zoschke would like to know if anyone would be interested in them. When Carlton was overseas, his wife was working for Bell Aircraft as an illustrator.

Comment: George Hudicka does a very remarkable informative newsy newsletter about his very tight 155 group of guys and gals.

Mr. Richard V Smejkal, Btry D, 155th Abn AA, passed away on 8 October 2007. Following his service in World War II, **Mr Smejkal** started a 35 year career with the **Quaker Oats Company** in **Cedar Rapids , Iowa**. He started at the bottom of the Organization and slowly worked his way towards the top. His final assignment was as Foreman of the **Distribution Center**. In retirement **Mr Smejkal** loved to "**Hunt and Fish**" and with encouragement from his Family took up "**Bowling**". Through out his life time he was an avid "**Sports Fan**" and supported the local teams. The cause of death was Natural Causes ending with [pneumonia.at](#) the age of 89.

Unfortunately, due to the time delay very little was available concerning the **Obituary** and the **Guest Book**. The **Obituary Editor, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Gazette** was very helpful and E-mailed a copy of the **Obituary** as follows:

Richard Vernon Smejkal, 89, of Cedar Rapids, died Monday, Oct. 8, 2007, at West Ridge Care Center from a lengthy illness. Burial to follow in Czech National Cemetery. Richard was born July 21, 1918, in Cedar Rapids, the son of Frank and Mary Hillmer Smejkal. He married Velma Skalsky on July 21, 1947, at the Little Brown Church in the Vale. Richard was a member of VFW Post 788. He enjoyed fishing, hunting, bowling, and the outdoors. Richard is survived by his son, Richard (Sylvia) Smejkal of Paradise, Calif.; his stepgrandson, Jeffrey Hodsdon, and stepgreat-grandchildren, Ashley Reynolds and Aniya Reynolds, all of Roseville, Calif.; sister, Catherine Stroleny of Swisher; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Mr. Smejkal is survived by his Son, one step grandson and one step great

grandson. Correspondence and messages of Condolence may be addressed to the **Smejkal Family** as follows:

Mr. Richard A. Smejkal

119 Fountain Ave

Paradise, CA 95969

E-mail ----- rsme2@juno.com (The Son's Address)

Thomas B. Nolan Jr. (507-G)



Thomas B. Nolan, Jr. passed on Tuesday, July 29, 2008 after a valiant five years of living with cancer. He will be dearly missed by his wife and best friend of almost 59 years, Joan as well as his two children, Cheryl Drinkwater (David) and Thomas III (Joan); three grandsons, Sean Drinkwater (Jussi), Thomas IV and Craig Nolan. Also survived by cousins, Jim Kiernan, Richard Kiernan (Jane); and wonderful friend, Mickey Felton; his caring in-laws, the Lovejoy family, his extended lacrosse friends and many other friends. Tom served in the U.S. Army Paratroops during WWII. After completing jump school at Fort Benning, Georgia, he became a pathfinder and went on to

glider training school. He shipped out to Europe and was assigned to the 17th ABD, PIR. He participated (jumped) in "Operation Varsity", the huge airborne invasion of Germany, according to Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, the most effective airborne operation of WWII. During that operation Tom earned the Bronze Star. At the end of the war in Europe the 507 PIR was assigned to guard the displaced persons camp in Essen, Germany. Shortly after, he shipped out on the William and Mary Victory Ship, heading for the U.S and then to Japan when President Truman ordered the atomic bombs dropped on Japan, thus ending the war in the Pacific. Tom was ultimately discharged from Fort Bragg, N.C. The beautiful Airborne Museum at Fayetteville, N.C., is the recipient of items donated by Tom. Tom joined NBC Television in New York in April 1948. He was the special effects Crew chief and worked with everyone from Milton Berle and Howdy Doody to Saturday Night Live and David Letterman--- 40 years, retiring in 1988 when he and his wife Joan moved to Tucson, Arizona. Tom shared in the Emmy awarded by the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences for the Kraft Television Theater's LIVE production of "A Night to Remember", the story of the sinking of the Titanic. Tom's avocation was coaching lacrosse. He began coaching in 1947 and completed his 60th year in 2007! Tom was voted "Lacrosse Man of The Year" by the United States Lacrosse Coaches Association in 1981. He became a member of the Long Island Metropolitan Lacrosse Hall of Fame in 1994 and received the first award given by the Lacrosse Association in the new category of "For the Growth of the Game" in 2002. While living in Tucson he brought lacrosse to the boys and girls of San Xavier Mission School for 12 years and coached at the University of Arizona, St. Gregory

Preparatory School and Townsend Middle School. He was buried at East Lawn Cemetery on Grant Road. In lieu of flowers, if desired, donations may be made to the San Xavier Mission School in memory of Coach Nolan, 1996 W. San Xavier Mission School, Tucson, Arizona 85746, Tucson Medical Center Hospice, Peppi's House or the charity of your choice. His 507th Parachute Regiment is currently the paratrooper training regiment at Fort Benning.

Mr. Nolan is survived by his Wife of nearly 59 years, **Joan**. one Son, one Daughter and three grandchildren. Correspondence and messages of Condolence may be addressed to the **Nolan Family** as follows: **Mrs Joan Nolan, 5631 N Placita Arizpe, Tucson, AZ 85718-4635**

E-mail jandtnolanaz@aol.com

COMMENT: To Joan: Due to an unfortunate crash of my computer a few years ago, I had lost all my contact information. I distinctly remember having had coffee with Tom Nolan and Joan at a coffee shop on the road after one of our reunions several years ago. In our conversations, he never mentioned anything about the stupendous job he did for a living and of his fame in his Lacrosse avocation.

REPLY FROM JOAN: Hi Bill,

Thank you for your kind e-mail about Tom. I miss him so much but I am fortunate to have many supporting friends here in Tucson, where I plan to stay. Yes, I would like to have the last 9 issues of the 17th's newsletter, if that is convenient.

I was pleased to hear you remembered seeing us after (I believe) the 17th Airborne 50th reunion in Fayetteville, September 2004. We were visiting with old high school friends who took us to Brookgreen Gardens. We saw you and Linda in the little coffee shop/restaurant. The picture in Tom's obituary is the one YOU took of Tom and me in the coffee shop. It is my favorite picture of Tom. I had it printed larger and cut my photo out!

I will include both your e-mail addresses in my e-address book. (I think I may still have an old e-mail address for you - I will check) Please give my best to Linda.

I do appreciate your contact. Thank you.

Sincerely, Joan Nolan

NOTE: I send belated condolences to Joan Nolan and her family. Tom Nolan was originally 82nd Airborne, but his 507th PIR Regiment was reassigned to the 17th Airborne in the latter phase of World War II for the crossing of the Rhine River in Operation Varsity that helped to defeat Germany. After the 50th Reunion of the 17th Airborne at Fayetteville, NC, my wife and I met Tom Nolan and Joan at a roadside coffee house. We shared our precious moments in having coffee together to restore a time of comradeship from the war.

His departure is now like losing a buddy in combat when I learned of Tom's passing. Tom's journey through his lifetime was quite productive, I was proud to learn. But Tom Nolan had already fulfilled his destiny to continue on in his journey through Eternity. No one actually dies---he is transformed into a fond memory shared among his family members and friends. I am glad to have met him to become his friend. Bill Tom, 17th Airborne Medic (As posted in "Legacy.Com")

The End-of-the-Year Message From our Colonel Townsend

After a 54 year illustrious history the 17th Airborne Division Association is nearing the end of the road. Father TIME, with some assistance from a series of Age and Health Problems, has hastened the day when we must say "FAREWELL". It was a very painful decision that we made to dissolve at our Farewell Reunion in Hampton, Virginia, in October 2007. In hindsight, that was probably one of our better decisions as we were able to complete the very complex Dissolution Process without major problems. Much of the success was due to the expertise and hard work of our Secretary / Treasurer, Mr Ed Siergiej. I am deeply indebted to Ed Siergiej, Joe Quade, John Kormann, Bill Tom and Ed Good for their very kind assistance. As a result we are able to complete the dissolution process on a very high note and not forced to limp across the finish line.

As we approach the HOLIDAY SEASON I would like to extend my Sincere Thanks and Deep Appreciation to the entire Membership and their Families for your very kind assistance throughout the years. I will not say "Goodbye" but "FAREWELL UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN". I would like to add a "Very Special Thank You" to our Overseas Honorary Members for your outstanding assistance.

Warmest greetings of the Season, and every good wish For the coming years. Wishing you and your loved ones A very Merry Christmas and a Healthy and Happy New Year.

Sincerely, Del Townsend, Co A & B, 194th GIR , 17th Airborne Division Association, President 2004 / 2008

*The Editor also concurs with Colonel Townsend's wisdom and foresight in instituting the Dissolution Order to dissolve our Association in light of the physical well-being of some of our aging members. The stress of jumping from a plane and the trauma of landing onto hard soil with the full weight, equal to his own body weight, of equipment, armaments, munitions, plus crash-landing in a engine-less plane at 100+ miles per hour with no parachute except for a tow rope, are now blossoming out with pains of hip-joints, knee-joints, spinal vertebrae, shoulder-neck joints discomforts, in addition to war wounds, plus old age. With due respect to all of our troopers, I concur with that decision. Bob Greenstrand (513-F) had said, "It is time for us to let go, as we have done our part in history, and let history prolong the deeds of what we had done." Unfortunately, Bob did not live long enough to take part in our closing ceremony, since he was the chairman of the Dissolution Committee.**

I wish you all a very Healthy and Happy New Year 2009. Most of us who had served in the military during World War II, had undergone the privations and the hungers of the 1929 Great Depression. Never in my mind had I ever thought that I am to live through another depression in my lifetime, but greed and dishonesty at the higher eschelon of our monetary controllers were to strap us down again to another economic slavery. I have fears that we will all be at the whims of those few who now hold our cash in their filthy hands. There will be punishments for these scoundrels at the end of the line. They will burn in the fires of their greeds. Money just does not vanish—it has to be all in

the pockets of those in charge. This is like the proverbial Fox and the Coyotes guarding the hen house.

Cicero said in 55 BC:

"The budget should be balanced, the Treasury should be refilled, public debt should be reduced, the arrogance of officialdom should be tempered and controlled, and the assistance to foreign lands should be curtailed lest Rome become bankrupt. People must again learn to work, instead of living on public assistance." (That was 55 years before Christ was born.)