



17th Airborne Division's post-dissolution Newsletter #7
(William (Bill) Smith Edition)

THUNDER MAIL CALL

Bill Tom, Editor/webmaster
154 Stanford Hts Avenue

San Francisco, CA 94127-2349

PERMANENT Email = kn6qd@arrL.net

This newsletter might be sent from Thundermailcall@gmail.com Please add both of these addresses to your computer address file to avoid 'spam' rejections. (Please note new address)

{Website URL = <<http://groups.google.com/group/17th-airborne-division>>},

Date: William (Bill) Smith, October 2008

'til the end of Me-----

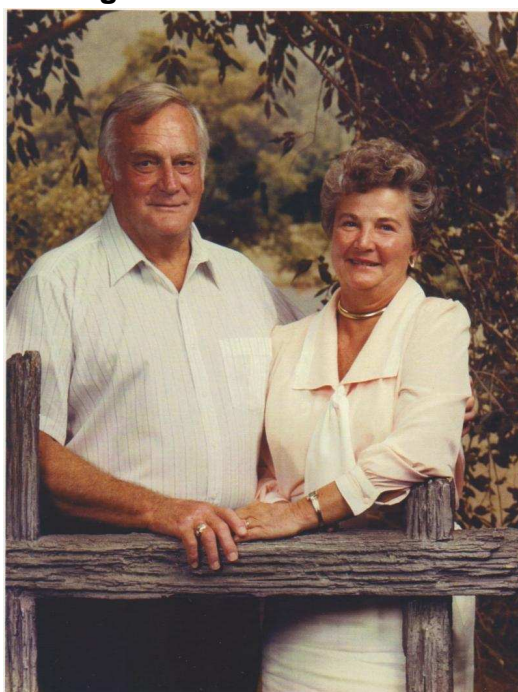
William E. (Bill) Smith, 466-HQ – Parachute Field Artillery Battalion,



was Association President in 1989-1990; Reunion Chairman on three reunions in 1989, 1998 and 2005. Born in January 18, 1921, he was the 6th children of nine children in a close-knit family in the Kensington section of Philadelphia. He had served six months in CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Luray, Virginia before he volunteered for the U.S. Army in November 1940 at age 19. Shortly thereafter, he was followed by his four patriotic brothers, an uncle and a 16-year old cousin, who had falsified his age, and was killed at age 17 during a battle with the Japanese, and 4 brothers-in-law. Bill volunteered for the paratroops at Fort Benning and was assigned to the newly activated 17th Airborne Division

at Camp Mackall, NC. He served in three campaigns, including the Battle of the Bulge and Operation Varsity, the first day of which was to be his most fastest thinking, fastest thinking, fastest moving, and most action-packed day of his life where he had to put his 4 years of training into practice. After the German surrendered, Bill was transferred to the 463 PFA of the 101st Airborne. After Japan surrendered, he was discharge in November 1945 to begin his career with

Prudential Insurance Company in February 1946, to helping people buy life insurance. He was always in the top 10% of all Prudential sales agents. Shortly afterwards, he started his own Property and Casualty Agency. Bill married Ruth in April 27, 1946 and daughter Michele was born in June 3, 1956.



For the past 52 years, Bill has been an Ardmore Rotarian and maintained a perfect attendance record for 44 years. He is a Paul Harris Fellow as are his wife, Michele, and his brother Walt and sister-in-law Mildred. His participation in the Rotary had helped to immunized over one billion children world-wide against polio, in raising funds for the United Way, Red Cross and Catholic Charities to the benefits of all people in need. Some of his free times were spent as guest speakers at local schools to talk about his wartime experiences.



Michele

THE 17th AIRBORNE ASSOCIATION DISSOLUTION PROCESS

Sooner or later I feel that we will have to put a report in Bill Tom's Email TMC a detailed accounting of the dissolution Funds. I prepared a quick draft for the Executive Committee's comment on 31 August. I recommend the following report be published in the next edition (# 7) of Bill Tom's E-mail version of the Thunder From Heaven.

Subject: Recipients of Funds and Plaques Following our Dissolution

1. At our Farewell Membership Business Meeting in Hampton, Virginia, October, 2007, a Resolution was approved that established an Executive Committee to work out the details and dispense the remaining 17th Airborne Division Association Funds after all of our obligations were satisfied. This Committee was established as follows:

Executive Committee

- A. Chairman, Del Townsend (Association President)
 - B. Member, Joe Quade (Editor, Thunder From Heaven)
 - C. Member, Ed Siergiej (Secretary / Treasurer)
 - D. Member, John Kormann (Historian)
 - E. Legal Advisor, Ed Good (Parliamentarian)
2. Potential Recipients, Members and Honorary Members, were contacted and advised of our plans for dispensing our remaining funds. A summary of Recipients receiving Monetary Payments is as follows:

Recipients of Association's Dissolution Funds

- 1. Arlington National Cemetery: \$ 2,500.00
The Ruben H. Tucker Chapter
Mr. John Lundregan, Treasurer
\$ 250.00 per year (10 years)
- 2. The American Battle Monuments Commission \$ 10,000.00
Ms. Marti Sells
 - a. Margraten Cemetery in the Netherlands (\$ 2,500.00)
\$ 250.00 per year (10 years)
 - b. Hamm Cemetery in Luxembourg (\$ 2,500.00)
\$ 250.00 per year (10 years)
 - c. Ardennes Cemetery in Belgium (\$ 1,000.00)
\$ 100.00 per year (10 Years)
 - d. Henri-Chapelle Cemetery in Belgium (\$ 1,000.00)
\$ 100.00 per year (10 Years)
 - e. Cambridge Cemetery in England (\$ 1,000.00)
\$ 100.00 per year (10 years)
 - f. St Laurent Cemetery in France (\$ 1,000.00)
\$ 100.00 per year (10 years)
 - g. Lorraine Cemetery in France (\$ 1,000.00)
\$ 100.00 per year (10 years)
- 3. Mississippi State University \$ 1,000.00
Department of Military Science, Army ROTC
Major Rashann D. Harris, PMS&T
\$100.00 per year (10 years)

4. The Airborne Historical Association \$ 2,500.00
P.O. Box 87518, College Park, GA 30337
Payment for Monument # 11 Operation Varsity
5. The Royal British Legion-Newbury \$ 2,500.00
Mr. Keith Williams, Secretary
\$ 250.00 per year (10 years)
6. The Thunder from Heaven Living History Group \$ 1,500.00
Mr. Colin Dewey
\$ 150.00 per year (10 years)
7. The First Allied Airborne Association Re-enactors \$ 1,500.00
Mr. Neil Galloway
\$ 150.00 per year (10 years)
8. The Czech Re-enactors Czech Republic \$ 1,500.00
Mr. Cenda Brzek
\$ 150.00 per year (10 years)
9. The Margraten Memorial Group/Dutch \$ 1,500.00
Chapter 17th Airborne Association
Mr. Pierre Ackermanns
\$ 150.00 per year (10 years)
10. CEBA (To support the Groups activities \$ 1,500.00
At the Hamm Cemetery in Luxembourg)
Mr. Camille Kohn
\$ 150.00 per year (10 years)
11. C.R.I.B.A. \$ 1,500.00
Mr. Christian Kraft
\$ 150.00 per year (10 years)
12. The Village of Chilbolton, England \$ 1,500.00
Mr. Peter J.S. Ward
Chairman, Memorial Committee
\$ 150.00 per year (10 years)

TOTAL \$ 29,000.00

Recipients Receiving Association Plaques

In addition to the monetary awards the Executive Committee felt that there several entities whose contributions to the 17th Airborne Division Association over the years should be acknowledged by presenting them with the Association Plaque. After a detailed analysis the following 13 Organizations and Individuals were presented the 17th Airborne Division Association Plaque.

Association Plaque Recipients

1. The Royal British Legion-Newbury
2. The 17th Airborne Re-enactors England
3. The First Allied Airborne Association Re-enactors
4. The Golden Talon Re-enactors Belgium
5. The Czech Re-enactors Czech Republic
6. The Margraten Memorial Group/Dutch
Chapter 17th Airborne Association
7. CEBA Luxembourg
8. C.R.I.B.A. Belgium
9. The Lilly, Flory & Joe Somers Family
10. Wesley Haex and his Web Site
11. The Institute of St Joseph, Bastogne
12. The Village of Chilbolton, England
13. The Real & Marianne Desmarets Family

On behalf of the Membership of the 17th Airborne Division Association may we say THANK YOU to the above entities and Individuals for your very thoughtful contributions to our Association over our 54 year history.
Sincerely, Del Townsend, President, 2004 / 2008; Joe Quade, Ed Siergiej, John Kormann, and Ed Good.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU MESSAGE FOR EDWARD & MARY SIERGIEJ.

Since our “Farewell Reunion” in Hampton, Virginia in October 2007, Ed and Mary Siergiej have worked almost night and day on the Association’s Dissolution Matters. Distribution of Association Funds after all obligations have been satisfied is not an easy task to meet the Internal Revenue Service requirements. The paper work is almost beyond belief. For example just one report for each of the 13 Plaques required a report in six (6) Copies.

On 31 August, 2008, I receives a message from the Siergiej’s stating “Mission Accomplished” for mailing the Dissolution Fund checks. On 18 September I received a message from the Siergiej’s indicating “Mission Accomplished, all 13

Plaques have been shipped International Priority Mail". A complete listing of the Recipients for the Funds and the Plaques are shown in this issue of the Thundermailcall.

THANK YOU, Ed & Mary Siergiej

On behalf of the Membership of the 17th Airborne Division Association I would to express my sincere Thanks and Deep Appreciation to the Executive Committee with a very special THANK YOU to Ed and Mary Siergiej for your work on the Dissolution Process. We owe you a deep debt of gratitude.
Sincerely, Del Townsend, President, 2004 / 2008

Dear friends, from Lilly, Flory and Joe Somers, pa0som@scarlet.be



Today we received your 17th Airborne Plaque. It's very beautiful and we are very happy with it. We gave it a nice place in our home where we can see it every day. We like to thank you very much for that nice present. We do appreciate it really very much.
Kind regards, Lilly, Flory and Joe Somers,
pa0som@scarlet.be

22 Sep 08: From: Haex <a.haex@home.nl>



Hello Mr. Siergiej, Col. Townsend, Mr. Tom, and all the other veterans from the 17th Airborne.. Thank you very much for the beautiful plaque that I received a couple of days ago. I'm very honored. I had a bit trouble with our computer, nothing worked...That is the reason that I'm a little late to thank you. I promise you that I'll keep doing my best. We never forget what freedom means and what price a lot of young men had to pay for our freedom. We keep remember them! I hope my generation understands and also never forgets. You all were from a special generation, a generation who made a difference to the world. The plaque is hanging beneath a painting of the 17th dropzone near Wesel. Again... **thanks**, We keep in touch, Best regards from the Netherlands, Wes. www.ouralliedheroes.nl by

Wesley Haex

Pierre Ackermans" <pierre.ackermans@hetnet.nl>

Dear Edward, dear Friends,

I can inform you receiving the postal parcel, including the mentioned PLAQUE with



covering Letter of Appreciation, in good condition. It is an honour for the Margraten Memorial Group to receive this Appreciation Plaque and will show this on meetings in gratitude to the 17th Airborne Friends.

In the meantime The Netherlands Bank cashed check \$ 1500 in € 1052.60, with which we can fulfil your wishes to honour your 17th Airborne Troopers at Margraten Cemetery for a long time and your confidence in our Margraten Memorial-Group is deeply appreciated. On behalf of the Margraten Memorial Group - Dutch Chapter 17th Airborne Association.

Senior member, Pierre Ackermans

12 Sep 08: Maastricht, 17th Airborne Division Association

Mr Del Townsend and Mr Edward Siergiej.

Subject: Monetary Grant.

With reference to the several info-mails re the mentioned subject, enclosed you will find copy of confirmation of the signed contract.

After the money is coming free from the Netherlands Bank, I will arrange control of the money, with the help of the senior members.

It is an honour the Margraten Memorial Group will commemorate the buried heroes at Margraten on several occasions with flowers, bouquets and wreath.

It is an honour we can fulfill your wishes to honour your 17th Airborne Troopers at Margraten Cemetery for a long time and your confidence in our M.M.G. is deeply appreciated.

Sincerely, Pierre Ackermans, Incl.: Monetary Grant Contract.

Van Slijpestraat 63, 6225 BK Maastricht, The Netherlands

NO REST FOR THE MEDICS

What weapon killed so many of our men? During lulls in battle, I, as a medic, also had the dubious task of assisting in the autopsies of some of our war dead. There were teams of doctors working behind closed doors to determine what had killed our men and, at the same time, to evaluate their health status. It was found that some of them had circulatory systems of 60 years old men. From these studies, combined with proper demographics, came the conclusion that high cholesterol diet was one of the causes.

What was the most terrifying weapon the Germans had that was to decimate our troops in combat? From these autopsies, it was found that most of our KIAs were done in by the German 88 artillery, which was first made in 1917, as a high-velocity anti-aircraft weapon. Its experience in the Spanish Civil War was that it was also an effective weapon against tanks and troops, since it can be fired at any elevation. Somehow, our own army weapon experts had failed to grasp from that lesson by building our own anti-aircraft weapons of smaller calibers that can only be used in against aircrafts. Proximity fuses allowed the 88mm shells to burst at tree-top levels, spraying shrapnel to decimate our troops dug into foxholes or hiding behind barricades. Their high-velocity armor-piercing shells had penetrated our tank armors. The 88 had an automatic spent-shell ejection system that allowed it to be fired at the rate up to 20 shells a minute---as fast as it can be reloaded.



3 Sep 08: Message from Candi Gang:

Hi Billski: I just wanted to tell you how much I enjoyed getting your newsletter. Obviously, I do not know many of the names listed, but I do remember some of the guys, and I also have some great stories to tell about past airborne reunions. I just do not want my parents to hear them yet. LOL. I have to tell you that I am really verkempt (emotional) on hearing how our Belgian, Dutch, English and Luxembourg friends still honoring our fallen by adopting their gravesites. I can't imagine their dedications. We should be so lucky here in our own country to pass on that level of loyalty and patriotism to our next generations. Anyway. Keep up the good work. Cyndi Gadd Gang.



COMMENT: The reason our population is not persistent in honoring our dead heroes is that our people were spoiled in that they had never lost their freedom. They had never lost our freedom because our generations of young folks were willing to fight to maintain freedom everywhere around the world! Therefore, we chose to fight in their land rather than to wait for them to come over here. I suppose that is why we are in Iraq and Afghanistan.

(Bill with his Army 45. NOTE: The bullet had already left the gun before the violent recoil started.)

1 Sep 08: **Wesley Haex:** Gutentag herr Tom, How are you? On 27 August we (Fam. Somers and the Fam. Haex) went to the Ardennes to see all the little villages where the 17th Airborne was during the Battle of the Bulge. Flory and Joe Somers were terrific guides, and Flory speaks French. I wanted to visit a very special little place, called Mande-St. Etienne, I knew from Bill Lynch that there had to be an Aid station where Mr. Lynch himself and "my" adoption soldier, Capt. Leonard McGee, treated the wounded troopers. Did you know about this Aid Station, Mr. Tom?? The friendly lady in black, showed us around inside. She is the owner of the house. The Aid station is still there, after 64 years, but now it is a vacation home. That is quite a difference... from Aid Station to vacation home...The troopers of 64 years ago didn't have their vacation there, they fought a terrific battle as we all know. We went to see all the villages, Flamierge, Houffalize, Bastogne, Malmedy, where a commander from Peipers SS-Panzerbrigade gave the order to massacre 84 GI's. In all these places, nothing had changed, as if time stood still. Knowing that their fields and forests still have some soldiers in their soil, never to be found...We remember them! We had a very special day, special to me, that I was able to visit Mande-St. Etienne and finding there a little piece of the puzzle to add to Leonard's story. Best wishes and take care, Wes, of the Netherlands.

Hey Mr. Tom, My name is pronounced, HAAKS in Dutch... and HEEKS in English
Wes

3 Sep 08: Jos Bex, Greetings from the Netherlands.

Joe Bex, Bill, another question, I have had a virus on my computer, now all is well again. Could you perhaps send me the new thunder mail calls again (since the magazine stopped) which were meant only for computer?? I have no more mail at all. I lost all due to the virus before I could print them out for my collection. Have you heard about the German Heavy Water plant in Norway during WW2??? Norwegian and British soldiers sabotaged the plant to prevent the Nazi's making the A-bomb. Later the US Air Force bombed the plant. There is a film made of it, even two. I visited the plant during my summer holidays in Norway. I have lots of info pictures and leaflets in English. Are you interested ???Let me know for I will send you the stuff by

E-mail and regular mail. Did you know the Czech re-enactors are now in Florida at the 513th C-Coy meeting??? Sid Laufer invited them.

I collected authentic soil from the Varsity area for you veterans of the 17th Airborne to send over. BUT AGAIN there are problems with the customs... I am finding a sneaky way to send it over. But anyway these pics shows that the soil I took is still very virile !!!!! I kept the soil in the garden to dry and spontaneously the soil started to let things grow.....

3 Sep 08: **Franklin Dentz, 194-C**, <AJFEDENTZ@aol.com>

Tom, Thanks for No.6 Newsletter. I have had No.5 and No.6. Ed S. tried to send me the previous ones you have sent but when I try to download it states..."Windows needs to know what program created it.. and so I can't get them.

I know your feeling about those who died so young. I have spoken at Memorial Day services on Sanibel,FL where we live and always mention that my great cousin never made it past 22. Hw was in the submarine service prior to Dec7,1941 and is at the bottom of Hunshu Bay, Japan in the USS Bonefish sunk in July 1945 one month before the VJ Day. Very sad indeed of our fine young men.

In Aug. 1975 I stood and wept in the US Cemetery in Luxeumbourg looking out over the graves of over 5000 from the Bulge. I was the only visitor early in the morning. When the office opened I then found the location of my friend **Belford Miller of the 194th** and went to his marker.

A few years later I located his wife,daughter and sister thru an ad in a PA newspaper and visited them.

Thanks again for your newsletters. I do hope your health is OK.

Franklin Dentz Co C. 194th

PS. To Ed - Thanks for trying to have me get Tom's Newsletters

COMMENT: AOL, Mindspring and Earthlink reject our newsletter as Spam unless you add my two addresses to your computer address file. My addresses are KN6QD@ARRL.NET and <17thAirborneTMC@gmail.com>.

4 Sep 08: **Jeanette Boyd, as ajboyd** <ajboyd@wowway.com>

Hi Bill, My printer isn't working and I print the articles for Jack Boyd as he really enjoys them very much. Could you please send them in the mail? we will pay the postage. Jack D. Boyd, 3802 Maxwell Court, Evansville, In 47715-2048 Thank You and Keep up the good work. Jeanette Boyd

4 Sep 08: **Pierre Ackermanns**, Dear Bill, Thank you very cordially for publishing a new newsletter and hope you will and can do this for many, many years while your healthy will stay okay.

Re: your story about Lindell Smith I can inform you I adopted his grave from 1999 and I met his brother Mr Robert Smith at Margraten in 2004 while he was on tour in Europe including the battle fields "Varsity" at Wesel/Hamminkeln.

Off course I will visit his grave during the Veterans Day November 11th as usual and as we do on Varsity Day March 24 and Memorial Day May 30, together with my 3 friends Joseph Bisscheroux, Joep and Flory Somers as the first senior members of The MARGRATEN MEMORIAL GROUP/Dutch Chapter 17e Airborne Association.

See also publication on www.fallennotforgotten.nl about 17e Airborne Farewell. Take care, Warm regards, Pierre Ackermanns, Maastricht, The Netherlands. R

2 Sep 08: **Charles Puckett, 513-F**, Tom, Which one? F Company 513th was relieved at Monty the night of Jan 6 by a unit of 193 or 194. Do you know which one? Chuck Puckett

194th on left

They

194 closed in on the left flank"

SUBSEQUENT MAIL: Hi Bill,

Take a look at this:

194-A 194-B 194-C

513-D 513-E 513-F.

Possible that 194-C relieved F Company? I still remember what the young trooper who took over my deep slit-trench with overcoat on the bottom exclaimed. He said,"Oh Boy!"

The thought occurred to me then that it might become his grave because, we had bashed the opposing Germans pretty hard and we received periodic mortar and artillery fire during the preceding three days.

Chuck

P.S.: After the Bulge, only seven men of F Company remained when they appeared in France awaiting reorganization . Apparently details was not Col. Coutts's forte.



The Czech Republic's 513-F Re-enactors at the mini-'513-F' Reunion in Orlando FL, in early September 2008, here with Curt and Pauline Gadd.

8 Sep 08: from **Simon Harrold**, email = simon@lerenfort.fsnet.co.uk

Hello Bill, Thank you for producing another gem of a newsletter. . How young Lindel Smith looked in his pictures and what a cruel tragedy that his death in action might

have been attributed to a lack of training. We hear so little of such instances, but I'm sure the circumstances of his death were not an isolated incident.

In our 21st Century world we are still sending our soldiers to fight without adequate materials, but nowadays they can draw our attention to this and the wheels can be made to turn. Best wishes as always, Simon

Collin & Ian Dewey to me

Display images below - Always display images from ian@deweyi.freemove.co.uk

Dear Bill, Thank you for the latest edition of the newsletter. We hope that both yourself and your family are in good health generally. We can confirm that we have received a donation by your association, and we feel honoured to receive this award. We thank you most sincerely.

Best regards, Colin and Ian Dewey, www.thunderfromheaven.co.uk

. NOTE: Your image cannot be downloaded

10 Sep 08: **Nancy Tougas** <ntougas@ipswichschools.org>

Mr. Tom, Could you tell me where the museum would be that would still have a glider in it – my father was a trooper in quartermasters and I believe he might have co or piloted one—it would be interesting to see what the real world was like back then—

Thanks for all the time you have spent in this endeavor----

Best Wishes, Nancy Hills Tougas

Comment: Nancy lives in Ipswich, MA. Does anyone know if there is a War Museum that has a Waco GC-4A glider on display? If so, please advise Nancy at her email address.

ASTP in the 17th Airborne. The 17th Airborne received a transfusion of fresh bright young college men in the Spring of 1944 when the ASTP was cancelled. Of the several hundreds so assigned, Joe Quade was able to find documentation of only 74 of them.

| UNIT | NAME | COLLEGE |
|--------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 139 | Harold Kravitz | Randolph Macon Coll. |
| 139B | Charles McCall | |
| 139C | Jim Hewitt | |
| 155E | J.W. Poters | |
| 193MD | William Lynch | Maine University |
| 193MD | John Mislin | Boston University |
| 193HQ | Rolfe Weil | MIT |
| 193HQ1 | Grover McNair | MIT |
| 193B | Lawton Collins | MIT |
| 193C | Casey Hozer | |
| 193D | Jack Gigante | MIT |
| 193D | Lynn Aas | MIT |
| 193D | Ed Morgenstern | MIT |
| 193D | Joe Rheinberger | MIT |
| 193D | Louis Rehak | |
| 193E | Tony Heigl | |

| | | |
|--------|-------------------|------------------------|
| 193E | Robertr Vallare | Norwich University. |
| 193E | Ralph Hill | MIT |
| 193E | Charles Thomas | |
| 193F | Phil Chetta | Boston University |
| 193HQ2 | Robert McGlasson | Bowdoin College |
| 193HQ2 | Phillip Rice | Bowdoin College |
| 193HQ2 | Charles Ruff | Bowdoin College |
| 193HQ2 | Phillip Snow | Bowdoin College |
| 193HQ2 | Leroy Torgenson | Rhode Island State |
| 193C | George Bachman | MIT |
| 193D | Emerson Murry | MIT |
| 194AT | Bill Taylor | Maine University |
| 194HQ | Bill Griffin | |
| 194HQ | Irving Holcomb | Boston College |
| 194HQ | Jack Ogden | MIT |
| 194A | Pete Hulewicz | Citadel |
| 194B | John 'Ericson | Rhode Island State |
| 194B | Neil Duffy | MIT |
| 194B | Louis Schneider | North Georgia State |
| 194C | Ed Siergiej | Norwich University |
| 194C | Bill Tom | MIT |
| 194C | Jim Dunn | |
| 194D | James Ingram | MIT |
| 194D | Herschel Phillips | UCLA |
| 194E | Franki Laspada | Maine University |
| 194E | Dick Schiffman | MIT |
| 194 | Duane Waldo | MIT (KIA) |
| 194D | Ed Mullaly | MIT |
| 194F | Roberg Browning | MIT |
| 194HQ | Herman Longerbeam | |
| 224MD | Edgar Webb | MIT |
| 507HQ | Chris Dobson | Clemson University |
| 513HQ | Ed Good | Loyola-Santa Rosa |
| 513HQ | Oliver Harris | Kentucky University |
| 513HQ | John Kelley | City College of NY |
| 513HQ | John Hall | No. Caroline State |
| 513HQ1 | Tom Kellogg | |
| 513HQ1 | Sy Volpe | Newark College of Engr |
| 513HQ3 | Charles Henkey | |
| 513B | George McGrow | Manhattan College |
| 513C | Jack Kennelly | |
| 513F | Tom Connolly | Cincinnati University |
| 513G | Steve Ward | |
| 513G | Penny Pennybaker | |
| 513HQ2 | Tony Arcuri | |
| 517SG | George Stanley | |

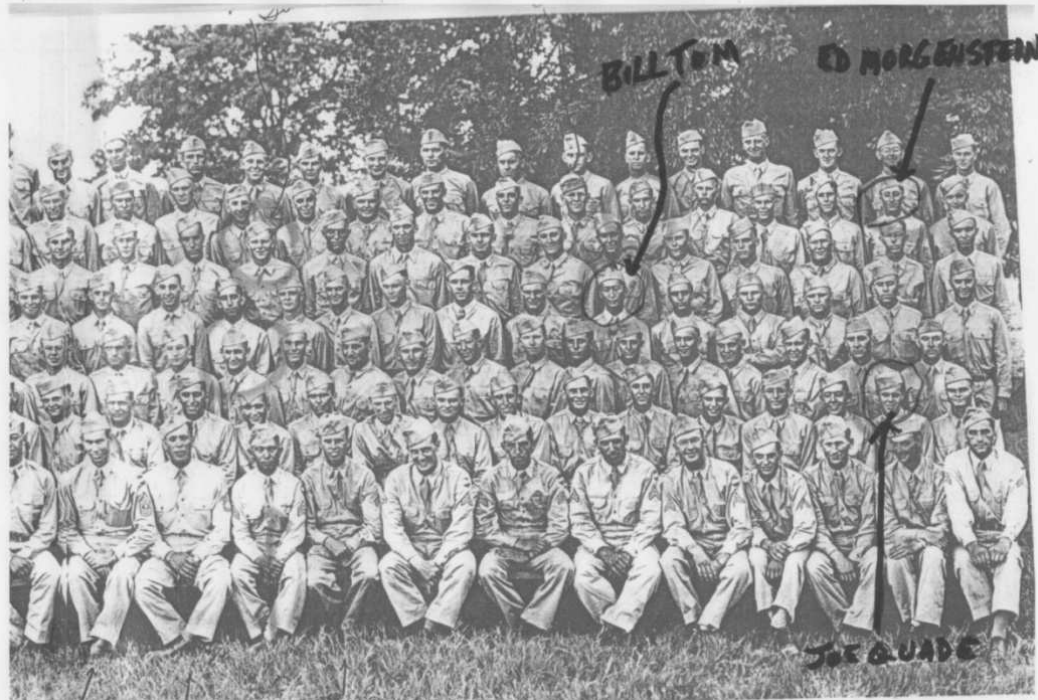
| | | |
|--------|------------------|--------------------|
| 517SG | Walter Zajo | Harvard |
| 517SG | John Kormann | Rhode Island State |
| 517SG | Harold Lefcourt | Maine University |
| 517SG | Dave Danner | |
| 680HQ | Herb Burstock | Norwich University |
| 680HQ | Bernard DiNunzio | |
| 680B | Ray Schellhase | Citadel |
| 680B | Robert Sheppard | Rhode Island State |
| 681B | George Szabo | Maine University |
| 711Ord | Horace Tillman | Norwich University |
| PM Co | Joe Quade | MIT |
| PM Co | Bob Wisotzke | Norwich University |
| PM Co | John Thomas | MIT |

If you were among the unaccounted for, please notify the editor. From among those hundreds, we have recorded only one KIA in Duane Waldo (194), who was a fellow army basic trainee and fellow engineer student with Joe Quade, Ed Morgenstern and Bill Tom at MIT.

COMMENT: During World War 1, England adopted universal draft of all men of a defined age and physical condition and were wantonly drafted into the infantry to fill the trenches in Belgium in her war of attrition against Germany. After the war had ended, England suddenly realized too late that most of her college students had been buried in Flanders Field in Belgium. For the next generation, she was woefully short of college educated men to reconstruct her internal needs. Fully aware of the drastic commitment of human resources needed to fight a two ocean war, our country was bent on winning World War 2. In doing so, our country needed to preserve our future resources to win the war and to win the peace afterwards. Consequently, every new recruit was subjected to a written examination to segregate the ones with a higher intelligence-quotient (IQ) for further training to become officers for leadership and for technical knowledge. Recruits with an IQ of over 110 was entitled to enter OCS (Officers Candidate School). Those with IQ higher than 115, were selected to be trained in colleges and universities in technical knowledge. The higher IQ level was determined to be suitable to retraining to a more technical level.

Meanwhile, our colleges were in financial hardship, devoid of students because of the military draft. The Army Specialized Training Program was devised to solve both serious problems. The ASTP was to have been a two year program of attending college all year long in an accelerated curriculum, but when the war was nearing an end, extra soldiers in the field were needed to conclude the war successfully, Therefore, the ASTP was terminated and all the soldiers in it was reassigned for field duties. Most of the guys were assigned to army divisions still in training, such as the 17h Airborne, that can meld the new men into the division without too much problem.

As it turned out, it is interesting to note that our President Del Townsend's Dissolution Board is consisted of all ASTP men, Joe Quade, Ed Siergiej, John Kormann, and Ed Good.



A portion of the Camp Fannin Infantry Replacement Training Center 67th Training Battalion at Camp Fannin TX. We all have two eyes, a nose, a mouth and two ears. Yet, we all looked so distinctive that you could still identify an individual 65 years later.

11 Sep 08: **Jaime Janiszewski** <jaimejski2001@yahoo.com>

Re: MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR MR. DON LASSEN EDITOR STATIC LINE
MAGAZINE

Hey Bill....ahhh.... I will be praying for the families and all of the men that lost a great comrade...

I hope to be able to attend some of these extra reunion and events... We have gone through the last few years... The years where you don't have any money and are trying to make ends meet... We are seeing some light at the end of the tunnel.

I just met a holocaust survivor in Chicago last weekend and was able to sit for four hours and learn of his experiences... I want to travel to San Fransisco and meet you and Little Rock and meet Dr. Ralph Williams and many others... That is my prayer:-)

I will be thinking of all of you as you send your friend off with Love!

Have a great week! Jaime

11 Sep 08: **Nancy Tougas** <ntougas@ipswichschools.org>

Mr. Tom, Could you tell me where the museum would be that would still have a glider in it – my father was a trooper in quartermasters and I believe he might have co or piloted one—it would be interesting to see what the real world was like back then—
Thanks for all the time you have spent in this endeavor---Best Wishes, Nancy Hills
Tougas.

PS: Could you tell me where the museum would be that would still have a glider in it – my father was a trooper in quartermasters and I believe he might have co or piloted one—it would be interesting to see what the real world was like back then—

Thanks for all the time you have spent in this endeavor----
Best Wishes, **Nancy Hills Tougas** .

12 Sep 08: Colonel Del Townsend writes, I received a letter from Mrs. Pamela C. Harsh, Executive Director, McCook Area Chamber of Commerce. This letter, dated 30 May 2008, stated in part the following:
{Colonel Townsend: It is my honor to contact you with the news that you have been selected to serve as our 2008 Heritage Days Parade Grand Marshal. We would, therefore, like to invite you to attend the celebration which is scheduled for September 27 and 28, 2008. There is also a special event held on 24 September at McCook National Bank to honor our Heritage Days Royalty and the Parade and Grand Marshals. The Norris Foundation Prayer Breakfast is planned for the morning of Friday, September 26. Of course, we would love to have your presence at the other events, but the primary time we would request is for the parade on the 27th. You have served as a wonderful Ambassador for Southwest Nebraska and Northwest Kansas area for many years. We truly appreciate all that you have done and would welcome the opportunity to recognize your outstanding contributions in this small way.} Sincerely, Pamela C. Harsh, Executive Director

13 Sep 08: From **Ed Siergiej**, eJsiergiej@alltel.net, BILL....JUST RECEIVED A 5 PAGE FLYER DETAILING THE REUNION OF THE 507TH PARACHUTE INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION.

DATES: WEDNESDAY, OCT. 15TH THROUGH OCT. 19TH

LOCATION: ATLANTA AIRPORT MARRIOTT HOTEL, ATLANTA, GEORGIA

CONTACT: KATHY GAULT, SECRETARY, 1261 NEWARK AVE.

WHITING, NJ 08759, PHONE: 732-350-4241, E-MAIL:

jegault@verizon.net >. or < kathleen.gault@usarmy.mil >

NOTICE: For those of you seeking a reliable, free of charge email Internet Service Provider, please consider "GMail. Com". It is the only ISP that has permitted me to send out several hundreds high megabytes newsletters in one shot, without charge or complaints. Go to "www.gmail.com/" Then select "Free gmail service"

17 Sep 08: Luc Horck <luc.horck@gmail.com>



Dear Ed, Here are some pictures of the church and the glass stained window at the church of Houmont. Unfortunately we were not able to go inside the church as the church was closed and we couldn't find anybody who could open the door... Next time I 'll be at Houmont I 'll try to get some pictures of the inside of the church. You 'll also see some other pictures of 17-th Airborne Division Memorials at Flamierge, Hosingen, Clervaux and the museum at Diekirch. With warm personal regards, Luc, "

Louise Morton = morton36@tiscali.co.uk I have a message for you from Johnny &



Vera Johnston, British. "Dear Bill, Greetings to the Tom family from Vera and myself. On the 14th September Vera and I attended "Operation Market Garden" at Spanhoe Aerodrome, where we met up with Colin Dewey and his reactor group. We had a very enjoyable day. Colin wishes to be remembered to you. Spanhoe was the departure point for American and Polish paratroops on the aforementioned operation in 1944." from Johnny

Johnston
Comment:

15 Sep 08: **Pierre Ackermans** writes his own remembrance of World War II. Without warning, on May 10th, 1940, when he was only 9 years old, the German war machines came rumbling through The Netherlands, Belgium and into France. But the war was then in Poland, over a thousand miles away. It was a shock to have war comes to their peaceful countries. Then started the long occupation for the next four long years. His country's livelihood changed all of a sudden with curfews, darkened streets, food shortages, concentration camps, prisoners to work in Germany, Jewish people arrested and sent to death camps.

After four years, salvation came in the form of airborne troops from Operation Market-Garden with the dropping of the 101st, 82nd and British 1st Airborne, with the 17th Airborne in reserve. The taking of the bridge across the Rhine at Arheim failed, but freedom was again visible to the hearts of his people. Then came the Battle of the Bulge

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, TINA FOORD

Hello Bill, received your news letter, thanks for all the information that you so



painstakingly relate to all the members who loved getting the TFH.,and now we all rely on you for keeping us informed by e- mail. It will be my birthday on Oct 4th I will be joining you Octogenarians, my daughter is doing something special for the day, it's a secret,and so far nobodys talking. I've called Rose Taylor and hope to see her soon. Say hello to Linda.

Tina Foord waving while in a bus line headed for Fort Benning, GA.

WELL WISHES: Tina, we send you love and well-wishes for your new adventure into our Octogenarian plateau in life. It is the start of your new vision of looking back over the years to shed a few tears for the past long gone, but you can always look ahead to find happy comfort of relaxation of doing anything you well please. Who is left to complain? Happy Birthday!

13 Sep 08: Pierre Ackermans, RE: Monetary Grant Contract.

Dear Gentlemen, (from Pierre Ackermans).





















With reference to the several info-mails re the mentioned subject, enclosed you will find copy of confirmation of the signed contract.

After the money is coming free from the Netherlands Bank, I will arrange control of the money, with the help of the senior members.

It is an honour the Margraten Memorial Group will commemorate the buried heroes at Margraten on several occasions with flowers, bouquets and wreath.

It is an honour we can fulfil your wishes to honour your 17th Airborne Troopers at Margraten Cemetery.

1990 Washington DC Reunion

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|----------------------|
|  |  |  |  | Henry Dorff |
|  |  |  |  | John Drochak |
|  |  |  |  | Gale Dorn |
|  |  |  |  | John Doyle |
|  |  |  |  | Paul & Liliana Drago |

Henry Easley (rear view) was 155-D

Recently recovered photos after computer crash



17th Airborne marching in a parade down Constitution Avenue, in July 1990..

As I recalled, ahead of us were the Washington Redskin's band and their many beautiful and shapely majorettes were for our eyes to focus on to stay in step.



Harmonica rendition of a patriotic tune after the 9-11 attack, during a memorial observance at the Cathay Amateur Radio group picnic.



A 50-megaton Hydrogen bomb beneath a B-52 bomber. (Linda in the background, though fearful it might explode)
50 megatons was not the weight of the bomb, but it had the equivalence of 50-million tons of TNT in explosive power.



VE-Day

Bill was near enough to attack Berlin when the war ended on May 8, 1945, but he did not know the war had ended until the next day, not until he saw German soldiers marching towards him with their hands clasped behind their head. There was no big celebration because of the wounded and those killed on VE-Day.

CELL PHONE EMERGENCIES:

If you were to be in an out-of-coverage area during an emergency when your 9-1-1 cannot be activated, try keying 2-1-1, which is a world wide mobile emergency number for cell phones. Or, If your cell phone is low on battery, key in '3370#'. That would activate your cell phone's emergency battery. This battery is recharged when you recharge your cell phone. You should copy this message into your note book and put it into your purse.

The 61st reunion of Co. A 513 513th PIR

Hi Tom Company A 513 PIR held their 61st reunion in Columbus GA & Fort Benning during the week of Sept 8-14 2008. We had 10 troopers attending (one was injured while traveling & had to return home). Several wives and widows and children were also in the group.

The highlight of the reunion was a visit to the Parachute school. We attended a graduation exercise and were honored to pin jump wings on the new troopers. A unit and/or training jump was not scheduled during the week and a free fall demonstration was canceled at the last minute due to high winds. Lunch was eaten in a unit mess. Our hosts were more than gracious and the troops were magnificent. And to the man, each of us were reminded of our youth and again our chest expanded just a bit in the pride that we were once active parachutist. And in our hearts we are and always will be a paratrooper.

Company A is going to try it again next year. North Canton Ohio is the drop area. Was surprised and sorry to hear about Don Lassen. I have heard that an attempt will be made to continue the publication of the Static Line and the scheduled trip to Europe is still on the calendar. Take care & God bless

J. R. Jones, Co A 513 PIR 17th Abn Div

From:

25 Sep 08: From: **xavier van daele** <x_va@hotmail.com>

Hi Bill, As you know him, I am occupied with writing the roster of the 17th Airborne. I began with the 513th PIR. I fell on a mystery which you can maybe resolve.

Pvt **Vincent J. Cornacchio**

Died: Sunday, January 07, 1945

Buried at: Normandy American Cemetery, Location: Colleville-sur-Mer, France

Plot: D Row: 24 Grave: 6 Buried in Normandy??? How is it possible?

Xavier

Ralph Peeters <ralph.peeters@xs4all.nl>

Dear bill tom, I don't know if you remember me. But i send you a e-mail 2 years ago because i was searching for family members of Pfc. Randolph R. Greco. He is the soldier I adopted the grave of. You also had me put a request in the thunder of heaven magazine.

Well, in the mean time I have found a family member of Randolph R. Greco in the US. Maybe some members of the 17th Airborne recognize Randolph R. Greco from the picture. It was the picture of his wedding. He was married to Rose just before he got killed in Germany. And also i got a picture from 1945 from his grave. Got it from a family member called Nancy Oakley her girls name is greco. , Hope we stay in contact. Sincerely, Ralph peters, Brunssum, Limburg. The Netherlands.



Randolph wedding & Ralph Peeters at his gravesite at Margraten

25 Sep 08: **Valerie Vicari** <valerievicari@gmail.com> wrote:

My name is Valerie Vicari, and I am the daughter of Blaine Phillip Davis. My father was a paratrooper in the 717th unit of the airborne. I ran across your newsletter as I was searching for information about what possible role my father may have played during the war. If you could include me in your list of those who you send your newsletter to I would greatly appreciate it. I was very excited to see something like this available. Thank you very much for your consideration, and God bless you, Valerie Vicari



REPLY: Valerie, Thank you for your message. We have 87 Davis's assigned to the 17th Airborne Division during World War II. I did not find a Blaine Davis, but we did have a Phillip Davis, having served with the 517th Parachute Infantry Regiment. I presumed he was your dad.

To Bill: Thank you so very much for your reply, and for sending the first newsletter. I am passing them on to my sisters and daughters. We all appreciate them, and you, very much. My father was Blaine Phillip Davis and was in the 717th Airborne Ordnance Maintenance Co. I got that off his

separation/honorable discharge papers. His army serial # is: 6 580 663. So the Philip Davis you found in the 517th does not sound like my father. I am not sure if he could have been a part of another unit before that. I also know very little about how the military works, so please be patient with me. I do have several pictures of my father and would be happy to send them to you. One is even of him during paratrooper training in Alaska. I have also written to military records requesting anything they could tell me as well. My dad would only talk about the "funny stuff" and nicknames of his buddies during the war and there is so much I would like to know about this man who was my hero all of his life, and still is after his passing. Also, Thank you so much, Tom, for the roster of the 717th, I can't tell you how much I appreciate all of your help. I plan to send letters to them and see what turns up. I'll let you know any updates. God bless you. Thank you for all you do. Again, thank you so very much,
Respectfully, Valerie Vicari

29 Sep 08: Steve Wright, <marfleetwright@tiscali.co.uk>

to Bill K Tom <thundermailcall@gmail.com>

Calling Varsity Veterans from 507th, 464th, 681st, 680th, 155th and 224th. My Varsity book, "The Last Drop: Operation Varsity March 24-25th 1945", has now been in print for a little over six months. I'm pleased to say that it's doing well, but reviewers have picked up on the greater concentration on the activities of 6th Airborne. I can assure you that this was not intentional. It's simply that, although requests for accounts went to veterans from both divisions, the greater amount of information came from 6th Airborne. I have discussed the mismatch with my Publisher. Excessive costs in reflowing text means that nothing can be done in a reprint. However, there may be a second edition when updates may be included. I would like to hold accounts on file should that possibility become a reality. So, why only the listed units? Those are the ones where I am short of narratives. Please email me if you would like to send your account. Many thanks, Steve Wright

I wish you success!

29 Sep 08: Roger Marquet
BASTOGNE WILL NEVER FORGET !

Recently, on Friday September 26, 2008, a brand new monument concerning the



Battle of the Bulge was dedicated in Bastogne, Belgium, in the presence of H.E. the Ambassador of the United States of America in Belgium, Sam Fox and the one of the Deputy Mayor of Bastogne Philippe Collard, the presence of the Secretary of State for Wallonie Benoit Lutgen. A delegation of the real 101st Airborne Division - Air Assault constituted the Color Guard and they specially came from Fort Campbell, Kentucky. A bunch of other V.I.P. was

present too and of course, all of of people from Bastogne, from other parts of Belgium, from the Netherlands, from Luxembourg, ... The school children were present too, a party of the 1st Artillerie Battalion of Bastogne rendered the honors.

Sculpted in a 2 tons stone block, the statue represents the bald eagle, symbol of the USA. All the job was made by an inhabitant of Bastogne, Robert Remacle. He was supported by the Communal College, most of the commercial entities and the services components of the City.

It is dedicated to the 101st Airborne Division and the other attached units for the period of the City encirclement, from Dec.21 'til Dec.26, 1944.

I added some other pictures taken in the night after the dedication day.

Please feel free to correct my text and to publish it everywhere you want with the pictures too (if you want), All the best,

Roger (Historic Counselor for the Monument)

Roger Marquet, Chenogne, 1d, B-6640 SIBRET

TEL. + 32 (0) 61.21.91.51, rogermarquet@skynet.be

SICK CALL

Jack Macauley, 513-HQ2, I just returned home from a 14 day stay in two different hospitals. On Sept. 2 I fell out with chest pains, unable to breath and fainting. Cecelia called 911 and the local rescue squad arrived plus the ambulance and rushed me off to the Kingston Hospital. They claimed I had bradycardia, a slow heart beat that the pacemaker fail to correct. plus a blockage in one of the veins and 90% blockage in the right carotid artery. They sent me via ambulance to St. Peters Hospital in Albany for a catheterization but they were unable to do it as they discovered I have kidney problems and the dye would cause them to fail. After many exams, X-rays and what have you it was decided to implant a defibrillator. I now have a pacemaker on my left side and the defibrillator on the right side. I feel great but I may not drive for 3 months, nor lift my arm above my head. I can not lift anything over 5 pounds. Well that is my story but I still intend to live to 104.

OBITUARY

David G. Birth (194-HQ) via Del Townsend: Mr. George F. Birth, Hq 194th GIR, passed away on 22 January 2008. Through a big assist from several individuals I was able to contact a Family Member to obtain the information for this message.

Following his service in World War II Mr. Birth was employed as a "Draftsman". He was employed by General Motors for over 20 years before retiring. In his retirement years he enjoyed Wood Working, Fishing and Family Time. He joined our Association in 1965 and became a Life Member in 1994. The cause of death was Cancer at the age of 84.

I was able to contact Mr. Birth's Son, Mr. David G Birth and his Wife , Julia, who so graciously, E-mailed me a copy of the Obituary as follows:

George F. Birth, 84, of Port Charlotte, FL, and formerly of Richfield, Ohio, passed away Tuesday, 22 Jan 2008 at his home. He was born 30 June 1923. George was in the US Army, 17th Airborne Division.

He is survived by his daughters, Barbara A. Birth of Bedford, Ohio, and Debra E, (Chris) Spurgeon of Indiana; sons, George R. (Rose) Birth of Medina, Ohio, David G. (Julia) Birth of Port Charlotte, and James E. (Susan) Birth of Punta Gorda, FL; 15 Grandchildren and many great grandchildren, nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his loving Wife, Margaret M. Birth and a grandson Brent V. Birth.

Mr. Birth is survived by two Daughters, three Sons, 15 grandchildren and many great grandchildren, Nieces and Nephews. Correspondence and messages of Condolence may be addressed to the Birth Family as follows:

Mr. David G. Birth, 1349 Song Street, Port Charlotte, FL 33952

E-mail = qualitywaterservices@yahoo.com (David's address)

Anthony E. Twardowski, Btry C, 155th Abn AA passed away on 25 July 2008.

Through the cooperation of the Funeral Home, who handled the arrangements, I was able to contact his Daughter, Mrs Karen L. Lemmerman, to obtain the essential details for this message. Following his service in World War II, Mr Twardowski was employed as a "Processing Engineer" by Continental Copper and Steel Company , retiring after over 35 years. He was honorably discharged from the U.S. Army and served in WWII from 1944-1946 in the 17th Airborne Division, and reassigned to the 82nd Airborne at the end of war. . Mr. Twardowski was active with the 82nd Airborne Veterans, the V.F.W. of Clark Post 7363, American Legion of Clark Post 328, and a former member of the Holy Name Society of St. John's and Knights of Columbus of Clark Council 5503. In his retirement years he enjoyed Traveling, Gardening, Music, Family Time and playing Cards. He joined our Association in 1985 and became a Life Member in 1995. The cause of death was Cancer at the age of 82. The Obituary and the Guest The Obituary on Legacy is as follows:

TWARDOWSKI Anthony E. Twardowski Processing engineer, WWII Army vet, formerly of Clark, 82 Anthony E. Twardowski, 82, of Westfield died peacefully on Friday, July 25, 2008, in the Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Hospice,

Rahway. Relatives and friends are kindly invited to attend the funeral on Monday, July 28, 2008, at 8:45 a.m. from the Krowicki Gorny Memorial Home, 211 Westfield Ave., Clark, thence to St. John the Apostle R.C. Church, Linden, where a Mass of Christian Burial will be offered at 10 a.m. Visitation is on Sunday from 6 to 8 p.m. Cremation is in Rosehill Crematory, Linden. To offer condolences, visit www.Krowickigorny.com. Born in Dupont, Pa., Mr. Twardowski lived in Clark for over 40 years before moving to Westfield five years ago. He worked as a processing engineer for Continental Copper and Steel Co. of Linden for 35 years before retiring in 1991. Mr. Twardowski was honorably discharged from the U.S. Army and served in World War II from 1944 to 1946. He was active with the 82nd Airborne Veterans, the V.F.W. of Clark Post 7363, American Legion of Clark Post 328, and was a former member of the Holy Name Society of St. Johns and the Knights of Columbus of Clark Council 5503. He was the beloved husband for 48 years of the late Helen (nee Sahayda) (1995); loving father of Ellen and her husband, Alan Altman of New York, and Karen L. and her husband, Michael Lemmerman, of California; caring brother of Edward Twardowski of **Pennsylvania**; cherished grandfather of Jesse Abrams. In lieu of flowers, kindly offer donations to the W.S.C.H.C.MacLeods Fund, 1129 Boynton Ave., Westfield, N.J. 07090. **DEATH NOTICES**

Mr. Twardowski is survived by two Daughters and one grandson. Correspondence and messages of Condolence may be addressed to the Twardowski Family as follows: Mrs Ellen Altman (Daughter Ellen) P.O. Box 537, Bearsville, NY 12409. E-mail mnklemm@aol.com (Daughter Karen) Our thoughts and prayers are with the Twardowski Family. Sincerely, Del Townsend
NOTE: Anthony Twardowski had actually served in the 155-AA of the 17th Airborne during the war, before transferring to the 82nd Airborne after VE-Day.

Rosemary Schlocker, wife of Leo 'Marty' Schlocker, 513-D.

I have learned of the untimely passing of Rosemary Schlocker, Leo "Marty" Schlocker's wife of some 63 years. Marty (17th AB, 513th PIR., Co.D) is the man who witnessed my father dying during the Battle of Dead Man's Ridge on January 7, 1945 and Leo was taken POW and transported to a POW camp in Germany until liberated by advancing American troops in late April 1945.

Funeral arrangements are made for Wednesday, September 24, 2008 by the Miller Jones Funeral Home (951-616-1866) in Sun City, California. After the funeral, she will be buried in the Riverside (CA) Veteran's National Cemetery following a brief ceremony at the POW/MIA Memorial. I am sorry I do not have more information at this time. I flew into town late today to attend the services and funeral and hope to have more information available.

During a brief telephone conversation, Marty requested that any donations be sent to the VA Hospital in Loma Linda, California in lieu of flowers.

Condolences may be sent to Marty at 27000 Crews Hills Drive, Sun City, CA 92586.

Since having the privilege of meeting Marty, I have regarded him as a good friend and near-family member. I request that you keep him and his family in your prayers.

Sincerely, **Kerry "Mac" McLaughlin** (GSS of Howard M. McLaughlin, MIA/KIA, 17th AB, 513 PIR, Co. D

Blaine Phillip Davis was in the 717th Air Borne Ordnance Maintenance Co.



He was born on Oct. 4, 1916, in Mt. Carmel, PA. He and his family moved to Los Angeles, CA when he was a teenager. He joined the Army on 11-11-1939 where he served till 9-15-1945. He married my mother, Norma, in July, 1947, and they had 3 daughters. He was an Operating Engineer with Local 12 most of his life. His closest friend was Mike Harter, or "Abe" as his friends nicknamed him because he was so honest, and they met in the army where they served together. He was a happy-go-lucky guy and would help anyone, especially with their car. His family loved him very much. He passed away on 2-13-1983. (Submitted by Valerie Vicari)

Bob Greenstrand (513-F) passed away year ago in September 2007. Bob was a



very active member who had proposed the dissolution of our Association in an honorable way and he was committee chairman to oversee that. But he did not live long enough to take part in our Final Reunion. In my last contact with him, he had asked me if I would be willing to publish a post-dissolution newsletter to keep the 17th Airborne troopers in contact with each other and to keep the 17th Airborne Division name alive. Bob, wherever you now are, I would like to inform you that I am honoring my promise to you, and that Sid Laufer is now wearing your reunion hat in fond remembrance of you.

Dieses ist das Ende, until next time.