



Denver Welcomes You!

Put on your combat boots and full pack and join us in a mile-high parade. The Ozarks are looking up as well as forward to their August visit to Denver. There are great expectations of some beautiful and spectacular scenery.

Judging by the amount of recent activity of newly located Ozarks from the Colorado area, we should see many new faces in August. Their attitude is enthusiastic as they look forward to seeing their former "Chow Hounds" and hoping to see many familiar faces among the guests. Bill Kamsler, our courageous reunion chairman, should have little difficulty in finding plenty of assistance from among this fine group of recruits. Let's just hope he catches them before they recall their vows to never volunteer again,

All signs point to a great reunion. In addition to all the excellent tours planned by the committee, all the new faces should make a fresh audience for our old war stories. Yes, what would a reunion be without reviewing the war. The anxieties and misery are often forgotten in our tales but even on occasions the truth comes out.

I am writing this during the time of extensive TV coverage of the D-Day invasion, so I am not alone in reminding you of our participation in one of the most historic events of our time. The TV interviews of men who participated in that invasion show a lot of old

fellovs, like us, but their memories are sharp and their feelings for their fallen buddies come through loud and clear.

Fifty years ago we Ozarks were busy acclimating ourselves to the surroundings of Fort Dix and the Philadelphia Transit System. Our preparation for the big move created mixed emotions and our actual invasion of Europe was somewhat less traumatic than that of our D-Day compatriots.

However, by the time you receive the next issue of this publication, we will be celebrating the 50th anniversary of our 40 & 8 ride across France and our initiation into the real war and combat. It is this experience which sets us apart from the other 86% of all servicemen.

Recalling some of your own war experiences may be as painful for you as they obviously were for those who participated in D-Day, or perhaps, like Jim English in his letter, time may have made their telling easier.

For those of you who are unable to participate in the reunion, we hope you will join us in spirit. We have been blessed with 50 years of survival so we hope you will join us in paying homage to those who were not so fortunate.

Our fallen would not resent our good fortune and would be happy to be among us. As you recall your Ozark experiences, smile, count your blessings and let the reflections brighten your day.



**A publication of the
102nd Infantry Division Assoc.**

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FINDING OZARKS BY COMPUTER!

The Assistant Division Coordinator for the 406th Regiment, George Rohrer, estimates that he has helped find over 400 "lost" Ozarks and he is doing it the modern way.

George has now in his possession a CD ROM device on his computer that contains the names, addresses and phone numbers of **76 million residents of the USA**. By comparing names and locations of our men listed in the division history book with those in the same areas that are listed in the present day CD ROM PHONE DISCS he is having fantastic results bringing home former Ozarks.

He sent letters of inquiry to about 50 members of his own company (406-M) and found 10 survivors and 4 deceased from that mailing. He has sent printouts to seven more 406 companies and 2nd Bn. HQ has returned 19 finds, L company 21 so far, and all together 406 companies have a total of 95 finds so far. A rifle company takes him about 6 working hours to make a complete printout, so George is putting lots of effort into this.

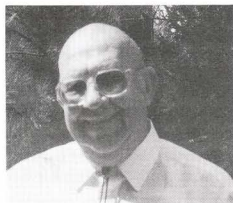
Now here is where you can help. George is asking for volunteers to send out letters to possible former members of the 102nd Division. He is offering to send each volunteer a printout of from 30-50 names and addresses of men who are possible Ozarks. He'll even send a form letter of inquiry you could use in your mailing. You can add to that letter if you wish.

The letter can come with George's return address listed inside so you wouldn't have to answer returns, OR — if you'd like to know how you're doing you can have the letters come back to you, and then forward them to George so he can process them.

As George says: "As we are an all volunteer association and as no one gets paid we are asking you to do this little bit for the association. Copies of the letter can be made for as little as 3-5¢ per copy and the stamps and envelopes will cost you about. 30¢ each."

Contact George Rohrer, 406 ADC
8928 West Lane
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President's Message



"REMEMBERING"

Ozarks have not spoken from chance about their combat experiences. They described what they saw as eyewitnesses of the action.

Led by General Simpson, Commander of the Ninth Army, thru Major General Frank A Keating, commanding the 102nd Infantry Division, the Ozarks fought toward Berlin, Holland, Germany across the Roer River, across the Rhine River, the 102nd Division arrived at Tangermuende on the Elbe River.

On May 4, 1945 part of an NBC broadcast by Lowell Thomas, included, "today what is left of two

German armies surrendered to a single American Division — the 102nd commanded by Major General Frank A. Keating." The war for Ozarks officially ended at 0001 on May 9, 1945.

Ozarks counted their "going home" points and "going home" was our goal. Each Ozark had contributed to the successes of the 102nd Division. The comradeship, the fear, the fighting, the dying, the living and moving forward, tempered the Ozarks by giving them guiding principles for success in civilian life.

Many Ozarks have made this association live by locating buddies. Congratulations to the Ozark search teams and a big "Ozark" welcome to our located buddies.

Send your registrations for Denver, join the tours, and have a good time. I anticipate a record number of first-timers to be welcomed.

See you in Denver,

ROSTER ORDER FORM

The 1994 OZARK ROSTER contains the names and addresses of our over 3,000 paid members and the names and addresses (as we know them) of all other living Ozarks. There are a few extra rosters available. If you want one please send a \$6 check made out to the 102 nd Infantry Division Assoc. (The extra \$1 is needed for individual mailing.)

Name _____

Ozark Member Number (from your label) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Mail to: John Emerich, Computer Service Liaison
308 East Derry Road, Hershey, PA 17033

OZARK REPLAY

A continuation of the story written by Ed Souder, 405-F. Ed is in Freilenberg, Germany. There is a captured pig in the outhouse.

We were now ordered to move to Puffendorf and Immendorf. We bound the pig and put it on the truck. We passed Col. Bryant and headed out at 1730 but my radio wasn't working, so we finally reached town in two hours. Couldn't find a basement so we put up on the first floor of an old house. That night we got orders to move out the next morning at 0800 against Beeck. We were up all night, except for the hour's sleep I got between 0500 and 0600 (with my boots on). I had a slug of the C.O.'s whiskey, took the radio to Bn. and got it fixed - a stuck transmitter. After seeing Tom and giving him 1/4 of Mom's fruitcake we saddled up and got splashed by the English tanks coming up for the attack. E and G companies were to be forward with us in reserve. About 1000, in a grey fog under artillery barrage, we moved out slowly thru an apple orchard in a hollow diamond with the Captain at the point. A red brick barn in the distance indicated Beeck. By now it had started to rain and was snowing but I was the only radio contact with Btn., reporting advances and raising artillery fire. E. Co. on the right got stopped cold on a down slope. G. Co. was trapped by a pillbox which Bn. had reported as neutralized. G. Co. tried to rush the barn but all were killed — even Buzz Turner and the Lt. who had the 300.

We were in a draw near the advance medics and here we saw our own men bleeding. Wemelling had been badly cut by a burp gun. He was only one of many and with the mud and noise and fear and bogged down tanks and no Jeeps to move the wounded. All calls for everything passed thru me to Bn. and back. Then the "Bull" ordered us to retreat — go around E Co. right flank and then attack. As I turned to give this message to Hops, we started up the hillside and my radio cut out with a snap.

We got up on top with the tanks and I reported to Dugan about the radio and took it off. On the left rear was a bullet hole and the back of the radio had a dent (just by my heart). I would have been dead in a minute if it had come through. Thank God.

We loaded the radio on a British tank and just then the mortars came in. Hairless had put the

mortars into use. I guess they hurt Jerry as we got lots in return. I had no entrenching tool, so I took my sheath knife and if half an hour had a hole 4 feet deep. But we moved forward on order of the tanks, so we went down another valley where the platoon of tanks bogged down by the stream. Here we met our own company men coming back wounded. Sgt. was holding with his hand with a hole the size of a teacup clean thru it/ God, it made us sick. Others came back the same way and then darkness settled down, to be cut by streams of tracers.

We dug in and protected the tanks until they moved back to night positions. I remembered seeing a dead Jerry so I went and took his shovel with a hole in it and dug off of a shell hole. I was soon joined by Dugan and Ross. The C.O. was back 10 yards, so we were close together. After getting down five feet I fell asleep, to be awakened by Ross saying a 300 was over at the Captain's hole. I crawled out and got it, ducking the stream of tracers from the right. I got it working, and boy it was nice to hear other voices again.

So it rained on. We were all sitting in six inches of water—covered with mud—but my pistol and carbine were clean. Soon it was light and we were told that Fort Knox was coming at 0800. So we waited. By 1030 they came up over the hill and were cut down by 88s. During the night we learned we were against a Panzer regiment with Tiger Royals dug in the outskirts of town. Nice people — we got orders to attack behind the tanks at 1200. They came over and 3 got forward and our first platoon moved out but gunfire came in on us — our own, firing from the flank. We called and called for medics but none could get up to take our wounded out — so some of our men died there without even a shot of morphine.

At 1400 another try was made with Col. Bryant riding a tank. This was also a failure and pinned them down up front. We wondered how Bryant liked living in a foxhole with mud and water running down his neck. At 16-1700 orders came for us to move without tank support. We got ready and started to leave our holes. How I prayed it would stop. Just then Hops went down - a sniper bullet through his right leg. Then the effort was called off as an answer to someone's prayer. Maybe mine..

I went forward with Hops to the front platoons for a little bit. Ducked a mortar barrage and came to a tank rut to find Wilcox screaming in pain with Wright there. He'd gotten his right leg torn off just below the hip, and a burst of MG. There wasn't anything to do. He said "Go see my folks if you get back." We said we would and soon the end came. We all somehow got back to our holes and reported that Hops was hit and Rabbi was in command. Huff came back after being pinned under a tree.

Our wounded were brought back by my hole and laid on the straw nearby. Some medics did get up to them around 2200. We also got some K rations and ate for the first time in 2 days. Then we all dozed off. No one had a weapon that would fire, so we passed out grenades and close to 0400 we put our heads out of the holes to see they boys from the 84th there to relieve us. Hairless had gone back to Bn. and told them how things really were. Hqtrs. was the last group away so Dugan helped me with the radio and we moved off over the hill and two miles to Plummerin, past knocked out Tiger tanks.

My back started to give out and I grabbed the F.O.'s coat for support twice as he was ahead of me. Guess Tom went ahead — I lost him, anyway. We got thru town and into a house where we dumped our gear. Here Matusesky was passing out turkey sandwiches and an inch of rum with water chaser. That was terrible stuff, but it gave us a boost. We ate them and ducked for the cellar when the 88s came in again. Here we got together and counted noses and cried like babies over our lost friends. Then we moved to another house, took off our shoes, and woke up about 1600 the next day.

I'd slept 36 hours, as had most everyone else. We started to clean up and dry out by scraping our clothes with knives. I got the radio the next morning and started to clean it up. Some job! That morning was clear and the P-47s came in and we watched them bomb Beeck. How we cheered as the bombs fell and how we wished for a little of that kind of support for the day before.

My back was still bothering me so I went over to the medics and got it taped and it did help. So by 1500 we were ordered to get ready to move out at 2000. We started out in the bright moonlight by the round about way. Jerry knew we were moving but he

gave the wrong road a barrage and we got out safely. We slopped thru the icy mud between great lines of trees along the roads, and thru two more towns as we neared Geronsweller, just 1200 yards from the Roer. Here we got lost.

After waiting at the schoolhouse, as the hour and morning came on we were led to our positions. The ground was perfectly flat so we climbed down into a trench. Here the water was in places over our knees, and the footing was almost impossible until we came to a pillbox. We were at the point of the line, like at Geilenkirchen with gaps covered only by fire on our flanks. Here we moved in, got the phone lines in and settled down while Johnny Air Corps droned over. We got a 2-hour guard started with radio contact every hour on the hour. I got 2 hours sleep; then Tom and I took over the shift — Tom working the maps and I on the radio. I also got two pages of a letter written to Mom. The radio was weak on my last call out. I let it go as morning was near. We woke up Ross and Pitman, turned in until we woke to rifle fire at 0730. I jumped for the radio and called for artillery but the set was dead so I grabbed a battery and broke the set down, stuffed it in, and got sending.

Meanwhile Hairless was shooting above our heads in the trench — and so was everyone else. But we got the enemy patrol away. So we finished our breakfast with cherry jam in the 10-in-1 ration. Weigand was going in for supplies and I needed shaving equipment so I asked Dugan if I could go along. He said OK but to get the crown code from Bn. for the attack, so we got rolling at once. We stopped to get Sarge and the Jeep at the shit house. I took a BAR in for repair and went into Geronsweller.

I stopped at Bn., got the code then rolled on back to Geilenkirchen and up to our old CP and greeted Zimetbaum and the cooks and Cushman. We loaded our Jeep. I finished my letter — signed Weigand's signature on the letter and then took an hours bath. Changed to clean clothes from the skin up. Took the tape off my back. We ate a hurried dinner of HOT food, mostly German. And then we took off for the front again. Sarge and Hairless in front, me, Dowd, and Ross in the back — as we rolled out past the spot we had been sniped at Hairless said, "I remember this place." I surely did.

We rolled on in the light rain that was falling. As

we reached the outskirts of Geronsweiler, we speeded up and crouched lower to avoid the rain. I looked up to see something and saw men lying in the fields get up and make a dash for cover. It came to me too late that they were under an artillery barrage.

Just then everything went boom; the Jeep jumped to the right and stopped. Sarge and Hairless jumped out, as did Ross and Dowd. I saw Ross holding his left arm with blood coming thru his fingers. Then I tried to jump out but couldn't move my left leg, so I rolled to the right, off the Jeep and down into the mud by the right rear wheel. I tried to get up but couldn't. I reached down to feel for my left leg — it felt as though it wasn't there, but I touched it. Then I became aware of a terrible burning that I couldn't fight. God, I was scared

Then Hairless ran up and crouched beside me and asked how I was. I told him I couldn't move and was paralyzed — hit in the left side. He said "Hang on, and I'll get you help." I tried to move but the effort was so terrible I just dropped my head into the mud face down and cried.

I remember listening to the air escape from the tire as more shells came in. Then there was shouting and grinding of brakes as a Jeep pulled up. Soon two medics were on my left side with a stretcher. They rolled me over on my left side, over the wound, and I guess I screamed in pain. They left me flat on my back, loaded me on the rack over the left fender and with Dowd and Ross in the rear and Weigand standing in front, clearing traffic, they took off. I grabbed the white flag on the fender as each bump hurt me and I know I was praying out loud — Oh God, give me the strength to stand the pain.

Finally we stopped at a house. Dowd went in the door and they passed me in thru a window after they had pried my fist off the flag. The room had electric lights and shutters on the window. They laid Ross down on a stretcher and fixed his arm. I laid on the floor asking one of the aid men for a shot of morphine. In 10 minutes they carried Ross off and laid my stretcher up on the table. They cut my right sleeve off and gave me the morphine while the surgeon cut the clothes off my left hip, felt around, removed my cartridge belt and bandaged the hip. I reached inside my shirt and gave then the code board with instructions as to who it was to go to, and then the dope started to flood me with sweet warmth.

They put me in the ambulance lower rack and we took off for someplace else — the 405th Rg, aid station. Here they checked the bandage put on by the 734th tank Bn., cut my right sleeve up to the elbow and started a transfusion. But they had to work on it as air got in the tube. Meanwhile Ross and Dowd were carried in. We talked for awhile, but as they didn't get a transfusion, they were taken out before I was ready to go. Soon the plasma was in and I was covered with blankets and placed hurriedly in a waiting ambulance.

The Negro driver drove fast for a half hour and we got to a big tent hospital. Here they unloaded us, carried us into a room where men asked our names and addresses, checked our evacuation tickets, and then I was singled out and placed in another ambulance with a Major who was in danger of bleeding to death from loss of a foot. That was wild ride back to Holland to the 76th Evac.

After having been moved to Liege, Belgium I was carried into a long tent ward. As night fell, we slept until several boys jumped up and dove under their beds. I heard what sounded like a washing machine motor. Then it cut out and the tent nearly collapsed. Then came the sound of the explosion. They were VIs headed for the nearby railroad yards and the airdrome. They kept coming over every 10 minutes, and even if I had wanted I couldn't have gotten under the bed then. The boy next to me stood it for several hours but when one hit the hospital he dove under his bed - in a full body cast. He refused to be moved so they covered him there and he stayed until the dope took effect and they could put him back to bed.

We were flown to England and carried to the 347th Station Hospital where we were put into real beds. How soft they felt after 112 hours on a canvas litter. In a later letter home, Ed wrote that the doctors tried twice to remove a piece of steel from his back and each time were unsuccessful. Then a Major tried to make him believe the pain was all in his head, although the steel could be seen on X-rays!

After 3 months in hospitals and 4 operations he boarded the St. Mihiel, one of a convoy headed for the USA. President Roosevelt died while he was en route, and the entire ship mourned. A train eventually got him to Washington state, and he was finally released after nine months away.

War Memories

by Al Guglielmo

Atrocities by the Russians

In my last column I wrote about the Russians brutalizing the German civilians, recounted by a German army nurse. She was freaked out by what they had done to her and many women civilians. An elderly German man and myself tried to help her while my buddy, Stan, stood by. The story now continues:

I turned to the man and asked, "Do you people have a doctor around here who would look at her and perhaps give her a sedative?"

"Yes, There is one nearby. I'll send someone to get him."

"OK, I'm sorry we can't help anymore. Tell her that we Americans are not like that."

"I will."

As we were leaving the girl was still tossing her head from side to side and screaming. I turned back to the man and said, "I'm sorry. We must go now. I hope she comes out of it." The man thanked me.

Once outside, Stan turned to go back to our outfit. I stopped and asked, "Hey, Stan, I thought you wanted to go by the bridge? Maybe we can see for ourselves what's going on, I still hear some shooting."

"No, I don't feel like going there now.."

"What's the matter? Don't you believe her? Or are you afraid you might see some more atrocities?"

He suddenly turned to face me and furiously answered. "Look Gugie, if you want to believe all that crap, fine. I don't buy it all. And..." he paused for a moment and with his finger pointing back at the store continued, "are you forgetting what these people did to us and the world?"

"No." I shouted. "And neither will I condone atrocities committed by the Russians, damn it."

Stan saw my anger, cooled off, put his arm around me and said, "I'm sorry, Gugie. I know you are hurt and the more you see of this the more you are going to get hurt. By the way, I don't have a heart of stone like I must have sounded, but I do think

we've had enough for today. Besides, by the time we get back it'll be chow time anyway. What do you say?"

Stan and I had been the best of buddies since our Army life. I cooled off and added, "But I still want to go to the bridge and see for myself what's going on, if I can."

Stan let out a chuckle and said, "Boy, Gugie, you really believe the Russians are our enemies, don't you?"

"Yes, Stan, I think they are just as much our enemies as the Germans were. And that's why I believe our fighting was all in vain."

Stan was silent for a moment, then quickly turned the subject to the war in the South Pacific. "I think us being a fairly new division, they'll send us to fight the Japs next, don't you?"

"Ha...oh, I guess so."

After Stan and I had chow, I went to my quarters, got on my motorcycle and headed for the bridge. I was determined to find out more about what the Russians were doing across that bridge. I was too late. There were no more German soldiers or civilians coming across. I asked a few GIs who were mingling around if they had seen or heard of any acts such as the girl described.

Two of them said they had been there most of the day before and early that morning had taken in a few Germans still making it across. Some of them had related stories of mass rape and indiscriminate slaughter of civilians by the Russians.

When I inquired about the rat-tat-tat that was still going on, one said, "You should have been here yesterday to have seen the panic and slaughter when the masses of civilians and soldiers tried to flee across the bridge. Some even tried swimming or hanging on to anything that floated. A lot of them were shot or drowned.

Talking about it like it was a show, I got the impression that they did not care either. Their feelings seemed to be, "So what? These people are getting some of their own medicine."

Disgusted, I went back to my quarters. My

buddies were celebrating the end of our so-called victory, but I did not get in on it. I went straight to my room. I took off my boots, sat on the bed with my head against the backboard and reflected back at all that happened since we entered the war zone. To me it did not seem like a happy ending. I just had a gut feeling that Stalin wasn't satisfied with what he was getting. His ultimate goal was to conquer the world. Since he got into power, he had sent 50 to 60 million people to gulags — hard labor camps in Siberia — who eventually died or were killed. He then lost another 20-some million more in the war. He was more ruthless than Hitler, and perhaps all the previous rulers in history. And, our president Roosevelt embraced him at Yalta like he was God. As our present young generations says when they don't like something, "Yuk."

Besides Stalin's losses, there were approximately another 30 million lives lost in that war, making it the worst ever in scope, destruction and casualties.

Our division suffered 452 killed, 26 missing in action, plus about four times that amount wounded. Our enemy suffered much higher losses in killed and wounded, plus we captured over 118,000, more than any other division.

(The figures from the Ozark History Book show 150 officers wounded and 3,375 enlisted men wounded for a total of 3,525. 62 officers were killed in action, plus 968 enlisted men for a total of 1,030 killed, and those missing or captured included 534 enlisted men and 29 officers for a total of 564. We are not aware of where Gugie got his figures.)

What were the conditions after hostilities ended? There were millions of displaced persons roaming the country. Some were destitute and hungry, especially the millions from conquered countries that Hitler had sent to labor camps. Besides taking care of our own freed prisoners of war first, we managed to repatriate all those other nationals.

Once the boundaries of occupation zones were established, we had to close the borders to German civilians to keep them from roaming. Since there was no longer a police force, we became rulers as to what and what not they could do. It is hard to visualize the plight of those people. Their major cities and some smaller towns were 90 to 95 percent demolished.

Food and medical supplies were almost nil and transportation at a standstill. Heartbreaking were the hungry children who roamed our campsites and building quarters going through our garbage to find scraps of leftover food. On occasion, we would slip them food and candy bars.

The war was over, and eventually with the aid of the Marshall Plan, all of Europe began to normalize.

In the fall I was transferred to France and eventually got on a very slow boat (22 days) back to the United States. After three years and one month, I was finally discharged and arrived home on Christmas Eve of 1945.

I sincerely hope we will never have another major war, for we may wind up in a worse plight.

I hope you readers have enjoyed sharing my war memories, as I have enjoyed relating them. Many thanks to the *Weirton Daily Times* for publishing them and to those of you who have expressed your feelings and comments.

(This concludes the articles published in the *Weirton Daily Times* which were written by Al. However, he has kindly expanded on his experiences during Occupation and sent us some additional material.)

The War Ends - Occupation Begins

May 8, 1945 was a day the world rejoiced. World War II had officially ended in Europe. We had beaten the most powerful and brutal military force the world had ever known or seen.

Some of our soldiers went across the Elbe River — about 35 miles from Berlin — to meet the Russians, another brutal regime, to celebrate the end of hostilities. But somehow I had a gut feeling the Josef Stalin Regime was not any better than the Nazis. Wanting no part of them, I stayed in my quarters and mused over the past seven months of the terrible warfare we had just ended. Also, my thoughts went to the still raging war at the Pacific side of the globe. Would we be going there in a month or so to help finish that conflict? There was a good possibility that we would, and that didn't paint a good picture in my mind.

Also in my mind was the terrible mistake of us not taking Berlin, even when presented to us on a silver platter. Who was responsible for that awful blunder? The first finger pointed at the Yalta Conference where Premier Stalin dictated to our President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Great Britain's Prime Minister Winston Churchill what the conditions, terms of surrender, and occupation of Germany would be. Our sickly president just sat on the deck of one of the cruisers and said "OK" to all the demands Stalin made.

Cornelius Ryan authored the trilogy; "The Longest Day", "A Bridge Too Far", and "The Last Battle." (No longer in print. Try your library. Ed) The last one should be read by all 102nd Division Ozarks. It concerns the battles for Germany by the U.S., British, Canadians, French, and components of other nationals breaking through the borders of the once Almighty Third Reich of Germany and the final run for Berlin.

We of the 102nd Ozarks participated in that vital and courageous role. We started at the border of Holland and Germany, went through the Siegfried Line — the most fortified five to ten miles deep terrain in all of Europe — the Rhineland and Central Germany to what we all thought would wind up taking Berlin. But, for some not so smart reason, we were stopped at the Elbe River, about 35 miles from that city.

My second belief is that in March, 1945 Commander of All Forces, General Eisenhower, wrote a letter to Premier Stalin of Russia (verified by Mr. Ryan) saying that we would stop at the Elbe River. Mr. Ryan related from interviews with the top Russian generals commanding their drive to Berlin that Stalin jumped up and down with joy when he read that letter. (No reference to this was found in reading "The Last Battle." However, Stalin appears not to have believed Eisenhower when he stated that Berlin was not a military objective for the American/British troops.) Lastly, when asked what would have happened had we gone ahead to take Berlin, the generals said Stalin had given them order to fire on us. I know it would have been a hell of a battle, but in the end, with our mighty power and ability to fight, we would have been victorious. I may not have survived, but that victory would have been a real blessing for the world. We would have eliminated the

evil empire that kept the world in turmoil for forty some years.

Now that I've gotten that off my chest (that just had to be told) I'll go on with my story of the occupation.

Rumors were flying back and forth as to what was going to happen around Stendal and vicinity. The civilians got word that we were going to pull out and give much of that territory to the Russians. Being around the CP, I found out that it was true. We were not to talk nor fraternize with the civilians, but when asked point blank I didn't have the heart to lie about it. I told the truth, and if they preferred to be in the American Zone of occupation, they should go to Bavaria. A lot of them did so.

Occupation Continues

Now that we had a few weeks to kill, most of it was done in our jeeps patrolling around the town and its outskirts. Every time we stopped, kids, young and no so young women, would surround us and ask for food, chocolates or cigarettes to give them. Being soft hearted, we gave whatever we had. In some places it was really pitiful to watch the young kids especially, looking at us with their mouths wide open indicating hunger.

Everything had come to a halt: transportation, commerce, trade, distribution of food, and other necessities of life. There were no police; we were the law, but we did not run into any major problems. They knew they had been beaten and they took their medicine quite well. On one occasion, a few days after we had been there, I looked up to my left and saw a young woman come to the balcony of her second floor apartment looking timid, disheveled and frightened. Being curious and concerned, I walked up the steps and asked, "You look afraid. Is something wrong? Did someone hurt or attack you?"

In near perfect English she replied, "No, none of that."

"Then why are you so frightened?"

"Before you arrived we were told that you Americans were so barbaric-like that you would kill us all."

After a good laugh, I replied, "No, no! We Americans are not at all like that. We would rather make love than kill human beings. Especially beau-

tiful girls like you."

A good wide smile came over her mouth and she knew all was well. Our friendship blossomed for a few days until she heard that the Russians were going to take over that region. When she asked me if I knew about it, again I could not lie. She began to cry. When she finally was able to talk again, she said, "I am very sorry my friend, but I will not live under the Russian rule. Tomorrow morning I am leaving together with my sister who lives nearby."

Pitifully, she looked me straight in my eyes and pleaded, "Please, please, tell me where to go?"

Knowing I would lose her shortly anyway, I told her to head south toward Bavaria. I gave her all the money I had, chocolates, and a pack of cigarettes. I even wrote a note to show if she ran into any problems. It read, "To all Americans: I am this young woman's cousin from Buffalo, NY. I would appreciate it if you give her some consideration.

(Signed)

Jack Weber, Captain
9th U.S. Army"

(Capt. Weber was fictitious, of course)

I was very saddened by her departure, more so because she would become one of the millions of displaced persons walking the roads away from the coming Russians and going towards Bavaria, the designated American Zone of Occupation. Being so beautiful, together with her sister, someone might attack and even rob them.

Later, as we traveled south towards Bavaria, we did see tens of thousands of displaced persons walking the roads away from the Russians. When would stability come? That we did not know. We were still in Stendal when things began to quiet down. Even the British came to town and had their victorious parade, complete with bag pipes. Quite a few civilians, mostly children, came out to watch.

Little by little life began to normalize. An elderly man who had lived in Brooklyn, NY opened up his shop. I even found a photography shop open and had a few rolls of film developed.

Sure enough, within a couple of weeks the order came to prepare to move. How sad! Land that

we had fought so hard to conquer had to be relinquished to the brutal Red Army! It just did not make any sense to me and I could not believe or understand the reason for it. It hurt! But ours was to do without dispute. We were the little guys on the totem pole. We did the fighting with heavy loss of life, but had nothing to say afterwards.

When we had finished packing, the order came to mount up and get in the convoy. In a short while we entered onto the famous German Autobahn (Superhighway.) It was a superb road. The closest we had to it back in the States was the Pennsylvania Turnpike.

The "State" of Thuringia

Our immediate destination was the 'state' of Thuringia. Being a large area, our division was scattered in many villages and small cities, the largest being Gotha. This city was occupied by our division headquarters and six other division elements. Our artillery battalion was given the town named Tabarz, which was situated about five miles southwest of Gotha.

During our stay, Sargent Hoyt Darnell and I took many trips in one of our jeeps touring around this beautiful mountainous countryside.

On one occasion, when Darnell and I were on one of these tours, we came down to fairly level ground. I stopped the jeep when I spotted a deer standing still at the top of a hillside. Darnell said, "Let's see if we can shoot it. Let's stand up, place the barrel of our carbines on top of the windshield and when I count to three we'll fire." I agreed, and we carefully aimed. When he finished..."three!" we simultaneously pulled the trigger. In a split second the deer went down. We both agreed to run up and get it. We hadn't realized how far and steep the hill was. When we were about fifteen to twenty feet from where the animal was down, and since we were both out of breath, I suggested we stop and rest. We sat on the ground facing downhill, taking some deep breaths to calm down our heavy breathing. Some seconds later Darnell looked back and hollered,

"Hey, there's another deer in back of you!"

I still had my carbine in my right hand with my finger on the trigger. I was sitting to the right of Darnell and swiftly swung my torso and fired from my hip, cowboy style. The deer went down.

After pulling them both down, we loaded them into our jeep, and turned around ready to drive off when we saw a farmhouse about a hundred yards to our right. An elderly man was standing and looking at us. We agreed to go near where he was standing and give him one of the deer. As we got near him, he moved back towards the house. By motions, we offered him the deer. He didn't seem to understand, and just as he was going into the house, his wife and daughter came out. We made motions to them and they came closer to accept the carcass. As we drove off, the two women waved goodbye, and of course we waved back.

Our kitchen crew were glad to get the deer, and that evening we men had deer meat to eat.

Our wonderful stay in Thuringer lasted only about a month when the order came to move out. It so happened that that territory was also previously given to the Russians, and they demanded that we move out quickly so that they could move it. So...pack up and leave we did.

(The final installment of Al Guglielmo's memoirs will be in the Oct/Dec. issue of the Notes.)

Comrade Seeks Red Ball Express Veterans for Book

David Colley, a writer and author from Easton, PA is seeking veterans of the famed Red Ball Express, the WWII trucking operation that was of critical importance in the defeat of Nazi Germany.

The Red Ball was formed in August 1944 in a desperate move to supply the rapidly advancing U.S. armies as they pushed the Germans back from the French coast. Since most of the rail lines

in northern France had been destroyed by allied bombardment, and the major ports remained in German hands, trucks were the only method of supplying the troops. With Eisenhower's approval, the U.S. gathered dozens of transportation companies and organized them all into the "Red Ball Express." The term comes from an old railway expression that meant speeding a package through the system.

From August 25 through November 16, 1944 more than 5,000 trucks travelled a giant highway loop from the Normandy beaches west to Soissons and back. The traffic moved by day and night carrying supplies to the front and returning with the debris of war: POWs, spent shell casings, Gerry cans and, often, the bodies of American dead. By the end of the operation the Red Ball had moved 413,193 tons of supplies.

We have heard stories from Ozarks who had never before driven a truck, who were involved with this project. A farm boy who knew how to handle a tractor, and perhaps could up or down shift just by the sound of the motor without double clutching, was often a truck driver overnight. More stories about night driving without headlights have been heard but never written down.

Mr. Colley is looking for veterans who were involved in Red Ball — truck drivers, MPs who patrolled the route, engineers who maintained the roadway, port battalion troops who stocked supplies, mechanics who worked on the trucks, and any other vets who were involved or are familiar with Red Ball. Mr. Colley will contact these men for interviews, in person or via the phone, about their experiences. If you had experience in or knowledge about any part of the Red Ball operation, or know of someone who is, please contact David Colley, 100 Pennsylvania Avenue, Easton, PA 18042 or call collect to 215-253-8662.

You might mention in contacting Mr. Colley, that you read about this in the Notes. We'd like to share some of those stories.

TINKERBELL

An Ozark Legacy

by Bob Enkelmann, 405th CIC Unit

The year 1979 was one of the most interesting of my life. Early in the year I became a born-again OZARK when I learned that my former infantry division, the famed ONE O DEUCE, had an association and was planning a return trip to Europe to retrace our WWII route.

A fast trip in July to my first reunion, in Nashville, where I was enthusiastically greeted by many former comrades in arms led me to join the organization as a first timer and sign up for the trip. I could hardly wait for September to arrive and my anticipation was exceeded only by the results of the fabulous trip.

We went back to Holland where we were overwhelmingly greeted as former liberators of the city of Heerlen. The ceremonies in Linnich with our former adversaries — German troops who made their peace with us and agreed that we both work for world peace — received extensive newspaper and TV coverage.

Finally we had our mind boggling introduction to "the workers paradise", a communist jail called the German Democratic Republic (GDR), the former Russian zone of occupation. Each of us felt a certain apprehension as we passed from freedom through Checkpoint Alpha to our first stop in the town of Magdeburg, where we would pick up our Intourist guide. He would be some faceless bureaucrat who would brag about the communist paradise and give us short shrift and little attention.

How wrong we were! Onto our bus climbed ULRIKE EIFLER, a vivacious bundle of energy, well dressed, well educated — a young lady of 28 with a perfect command of the English language and obviously as excited to be in charge of a group of Americans as we were apprehensive of the GDR. Bob Smith correctly gave her the sobriquet of "TINKERBELL."

For the next several days we were introduced to the sights and sounds of her new country, the GDR. She answered detailed questions about life in the "workers paradise", always ending with a question

about contrasting life styles of the GDR verses the USA. Needless to say, the OZARKS, never backward, dazzled her with our fabulous stories about the benefits of capitalism in the good old USA. It became obvious to me and many others that this young lady was not as sold on the workers paradise as her superiors would have believed.

We stayed in East Berlin at the new Palast Hotel, and from there toured West Berlin — without our Intourist guide. Upon our return to our hotel in East Berlin, Tinkerbell was eager to find out our impressions of West Berlin. I carefully explained that the GDR looked exactly as we had left it 35 years earlier, but that West Berlin had streets paved with gold, and that a young lady as intelligent as she could earn a fortune over there.

Before our last banquet at the Palast Hotel, an edifice overshadowed with the bombed-out remains of the Berlin cathedral with trees growing from the damaged roof, all of us gathered around Tallywhacker Merrill Oaks and a piano he had found to entertain us with American songs. As it was announced that our meal was ready, I asked Merrill to play one more song. The gathered Ozarks belted out GOD BLESS AMERICA! I have heard this song many times and by many performers, including the one-and-only Kate Smith, but never was it sung with such fervor and patriotism as that night in East Berlin.

As the final strains faded into the gloom of the GDR, Tinkerbell jumped onto the piano stool, pushing Merrill aside, and I thought we were all going to jail. Not so. Tinkerbell began belting out two tunes on the piano. One was WHEN THE SAINTS COME MARCHING IN and the other SKIP TO MALOO. It was then we realized the truth — Tinkerbell was a closet capitalist trapped in the GDR.

As we bid her good-bye after our last lunch in the Mecklenberger Hof, it seemed a tragedy that intelligent young people such as she were behind a wall suppressed by a communist government. I made up my mind, as impossible as it seemed at the time, that I would help this young lady enjoy the fruits

of freedom. How could this be done? Crazy schemes than this had been concocted while I was a Special Agent in the Counter Intelligence Corps many years ago.

On my return to the States, I contacted the CIA who sent an agent to talk with me about our trip into the GDR and our encounter with troop movements near the city of Stendal. This seemed unimportant, but they were very interested in my thoughts about whether our guide, Tinkerbell, would work undercover for them. Not wishing to be involved in a scheme which could end in her demise, I answered in the negative. Then I began a letter writing campaign and stayed in contact with her. I also stayed in contact with our English guide on this trip, Patrick Coughlan of London, who later visited both with us in St. Louis and with Ulrike and her family in Berlin on his subsequent trips. We sent clothes and toys to her young son, Jens, born in 1983. He was seen running around East Berlin in a T-shirt which said, in German, "I have a friend in St. Louis." Letters were received periodically from Ulrike and I always answered with a letter and a photo showing the glories of the USA, but in 1987 the letters from her ceased for 18 months. About six months before we left for the 1989 Ozark return trip, I received two letters simultaneously, one dated a year earlier with a note saying we would understand, and one from Tinkerbell announcing that she and her husband, Ralph, were safely in the West, after a harrowing escape from the GDR. I was able to speak with her from Austria and got a short story of their escape.

In February of this year I learned that Tinkerbell, now a teacher of the Russian language in the West, would be bringing a group of German exchange students to the USA for her first visit and would be able to spend two weeks with us in St. Louis. On Easter Sunday, 1994, we witnessed a second miracle when our erstwhile guide from the GDR, inspired by a group of OZARKS of the benefits of America and freedom, stepped off a plane from Columbus, Ohio for her visit in St. Louis. Many stories were exchanged, and here are a few of them:

Ulrike was born, grew up and educated in the GDR. Her father was a former German army officer, wounded on the Eastern front, and worked as a lawyer for an East German industry. Her mother was

a housewife who did not want to leave East Germany before the wall went up because her family lived in Dresden. Both had experienced freedom before the wall went up. Ulrike and her sister learned both English and Russian in school. Later Ulrike spent one year in Moscow studying Russian.

She met her husband in the equivalent of high school and he later earned a Ph.D. in chemistry. Another brother earned a Ph.D. in Biology, and a third brother was a truck driver. Ulrike and Ralph became disillusioned with the oppression on the GDR early on, and were encouraged by both parents to leave if they ever had the chance. She had had security agents in Russia steal from her packages from home, and heard horrid stories of GDR residents who saved for years for a vacation in Cuba only to be gouged and treated like dirt. These helped their disillusionment.

In 1979 came the OZARK invasion. Ulrike was assigned to the Russian department of the tour group in the GDR, and because she spoke English, she was assigned to the Ozark group along with another woman who failed to show. We were her first American tourists. This was her alternate job while she was on leave from teaching English to East German commercial pilots who landed in English speaking airports. She revealed that some of these pilots flew while intoxicated. One of the cruise ships she had visited sailed with a drunken crew – including the captain.

Ulrike was very impressed with the friendliness of the Ozarks, and our stories of the benefits in the USA and felt we considered her a friend. After we left East Germany her superiors were anxious to learn of her impressions of the Americans. They failed to see the irony in my remarks to her that the GDR had languished while West Germany had prospered since we left and returned.

A standing joke of those trapped behind the wall was: "The GDR created ruins without a war!"

One final experience finalized Ralph and Ulrike's decision to try to defect. Authorities arrived at their small home which they had worked hard to renovate and told them they were confiscating a large portion of the property to expand a road. There would be no compensation to them, even though this ruined their



A photo of the 1979 Ozark group in East Berlin.
Ulrike is facing to the right at the center of the photo.
She is wearing a dark jacket.



"Tinkerbell" and Bob Enkemann, photo taken at
the St. Louis gardens in April, 1994



Paul Wible and Ulrike, photo taken on her trip to
Las Vegas with Irene Enkelmann

property. This was the straw that broke the camel's back.

One day the hoped for opportunity presented

itself when her husband asked for a pass to visit an elderly aunt in West Germany on her birthday. Since both of them would not be granted visiting permits

together, they concocted the following scheme. Ralph received his five day pass and then Ulrike asked for a five day pass the first day of which would coincide with the last day of Ralph's pass. They were hoping that the bureaucrats would not notice the coincidence, and it worked. They agreed that they would stay in the West if they could do it together. Ralph left and while in the West was unable to communicate with Ulrike. East German authorities would not give Ulrike permission to leave until the morning of the day of her planned departure, even though she stood in line for two days asking for the permit.

As soon as the permit was in her hand she and her father, who had offered to accompany her, boarded a train with only a small suitcase of clothes, leaving her home, belongings, and her small son behind with his grandmother. As they got off the train in West Germany they saw Ralph at the station, waiting to board a train for his return trip. The scheme and the timing had worked unbelievably.

About a week later, after her father returned alone, both of their employers realized that they had not returned to work. Ulrike's father received a visit from the STASI, the GDR secret police, inquiring about their whereabouts. Her father explained that they were probably detained by illness, since they had assured him that they would return, and, if given permission to return to visit them, he would try to convince them to return. Given this permission, the father returned to the West wearing several sets of Ralph's underclothing, shirts, suit coat and an oversized pair of shoes (Ralph's), so that Ralph would have clothing to wear in the West. After Ulrike's father returned from this mission, he received another visit from agents of STASI headquarters in Berlin, telling him that if the pair returned they would not be prosecuted, and would be given back their jobs - since they were such good workers. Another visit by her father to the West, in which he smuggled out more clothes, had the same result - no return.

After five or six such visits, the police realized that the couple would not return and their home was confiscated by the State, their belongings sold at auction, and their son officially released so that the State would not have to educate him. When her father died, Ulrike could not return for his funeral, but her son could since he had official permission to leave East Germany.

From that first moment of defection, the couple spent six months in refugee camps while West German officials verified through their agents that they were not East German spies. Since Ulrike had to leave her teaching certificates behind, she could not get employment until they were eventually smuggled out via a Belgian couple who spent time in her sister's home during the Leipzig fair. The cost for this job was 300 West German marks. Ulrike was then able to get a teaching job while Ralph continued to look for employment.

During this time, I had contacted several members of our 1979 group and told them the story, after which they sent money and clothing to help. Ulrike and Ralph are extremely grateful for that help and asked me to tell everyone in the 102nd that they were thankful for both moral and financial support.

In addition to police harassment, Ralph's brother - the truck driver - was forbidden to leave the country, and the other brother was hassled at his job.

When the Wall came down, they visited Berlin and filed a claim after Germany was reunited. Their home was returned and sold. They also expect to be reimbursed for their goods which were auctioned, at the price the auction brought.

This story of the search for freedom from communism by a family befriended by the Ozarks is both poignant and inspiring.

While in the USA as an exchange teacher, Tinkerbell was able to phone some of our old 1979 group, and made personal visits to Columbus, OH; St. Louis, MO; Las Vegas with Irene, where Paul Whible was able to spend a day with her, the Grand Canyon, and finally Niagra Falls with her students, before returning to Bad Hersfeld where she and her family now reside.

Tinkerbell plans to meet with the 1994 alternate tour group in Nurnberg, to renew old acquaintances while consuming a few bottle of champagne to toast their freedom and this Ozark odyssey.

A German former POW speaks to an American Rotary group



The following is a speech given by Konrad Kreiten to a Rotary meeting in Colonial Heights, Virginia Sept. 16, 1987. Many of us have met Konrad and heard him speak when the Ozarks were in Germany in 1989. He has been kind enough to allow the Notes to reprint his words.

May I first of all, thank you for the great honor to let me speak to you tonight.

At first I had some objections and was – indeed – nervous. What is it that is so much of interest to tell you on my experiences as a prisoner of war in the United States? But in thinking about it, I could not turn down the wish of my friend, Dr. R.M.W., to talk here to his friends, the members of the Rotary Club.

My name is Konrad Kreiten. I was born September 3 in 1927 in a small town in West Germany called Vierson. I am married and have three children, one son and two daughters.

I experienced the last World War and was for a whole year a soldier in the German Army. I was, however, only a private first class and don't think that it was my fault that, once again, Germany lost the war. In any case in those days I still wanted to believe that victory was ahead of us. Such an illusion can, indeed, be acquired by a young person.

On the 23rd of February, 1945 the First and Ninth U.S. armies started their great offensive into Germany under the name "Operation Grenade", during which I was taken prisoner on February 24th near Linnich on the Ruhr.

The soldiers of your 102nd Infantry Division, the Ozarks, overran our positions. By way of Namur, Liege, and Charentan I finally reached the American POW camp in Cherbourg in Normandy, France. What happened up to then should not further be described here. I went into the masses and let things come to me. I still do not understand why 1000 POWs and I had to go in mid-March 1945 onto a ship in the port of Cherbourg. By the way, in those days I saw for the first time in my life the sea and the big ships and in those days – being only 17 years old – I didn't know much of life.

It took more than three weeks before our convoy of more than 200 ships at last reached the port of Boston, after passing through storms and rain. We were dirty, lousy and seasick, because the crossing was not on a luxury steamer, but under the deck of a Liberty transport ship. Our morale could not have been worse. Therefore, our astonishment was all the greater when we came off the ship and immediately took a bath while our clothes were disinfected by gassing and deloused in the meantime. Each of us was shortly examined by a doctor and the personal data was taken down. The whole procedure lasted for perhaps 30-40 minutes, and I found myself finally in an upholstered compartment of the railway, which I think you call a Pullman.

We were amazed when some black soldiers served us black coffee, bread, butter, jam and biscuits. Each of us had received in the meantime a bag with a towel, soap, toothpaste and a tooth brush. We felt that we were in paradise. We had become humans again, even though the windows of the railroad cars were barred on the outside. Nobody was thinking of escaping at that moment.

Already, on my first day in the United States, when we were proceeding through your beautiful country towards Fort Custer in Michigan, I had strange thoughts for the first time. I felt doubts in Germany's strength and in our politics. You should not forget that the war was still going on in April, 1945.

Indeed, Hitler must have been megalomaniac when starting a war against the whole world; he, who

never left Germany or Australia, who did not know either America or Russia. How could he judge the power behind these huge countries? A man who never saw New York, who did not know Wall Street and never had been to Moscow. He still thought he could beat all these countries — and this is hard to believe.

At that time I better would not speak out such defeatist thoughts, because when we finally arrived in Fort Custer, we saw the German War Flag. The camp was under the direction of officers from the former Africa Corps. Certainly I was one of the few Germans in the world who still celebrated the birthday of the "Führer Adolf Hitler" on April 20, 1945. I had to celebrate his birthday. I believe it was his 56th birthday and his last. That will remain forever in my memory.

This flagrant difference suddenly showed me that the war was still going on. We had to stand at attention and had to salute the officers. Here the spirit of the Africa Corps was reigning; here the war was still to be won by Germany. These officers would not believe us and called us "traitors" when we opened our mouths. There were fights and threats of murder, so the "traitors" were put into a separate part of the camp. This was the first contradiction for me in America. We young German prisoners of war could not yet understand the American liberality. We still did not know what democracy was.

The situation, however, quickly changed after the German capitulation on May 8, 1945. Then the direction of the camp was changed and all officers were separated from us and taken to a special camp. Fort Custer became a pure labor camp. We prisoners of war were divided into groups and sent for seasonal work into the 'Outside Camps' in tents.

However, let me first mention an aggravating measure which led most of us, me included, to a somewhat negative attitude towards the reputation of the United States. It was used in a shameless way by your friend, the French Government, to the damage of the United States.

Namely, we were not allowed to ever write even a post card to our homes, not to receive any mail from home. We saw the American Weekly News in the pictures; we read in the newspapers

about the disastrous conditions and happenings at home and in Europe. I call your memory to the bombing in the last months of the war; the great stampede in front of the advancing Russians and the expulsion of millions out of the now Russian-occupied parts of Germany. The morale pressure on the prisoners can only be measured by someone who had this personal experience. The married prisoners were suffering especially from this isolation.

Only years later, after my repatriation, I learned from my parents about their serious worries concerning their missing son. Up to April, 1946 I was especially missed. Only via the Swiss Red Cross was a printed postcard sent to them with the news about me having been taken as a prisoner of war. The did not receive the card until November of 1945. For that reason there was only one subject of discussion in the camp: "How is it at home? Is the family still alive? Did they have to run away, and if so, to where?"

One thing was clear to me then; our great enemies and counterpart were and still are the Russians. Nobody wanted to have anything to do with them. They were the freight number one.

Besides the psychic pressure there were naturally other, nearer problems. These automatically develop when thousands of young, healthy men are being well fed, are cut off from any contact with the outside world, where they cannot see girls and cannot experience love. You certainly understand what I mean. Such a thing can become very bad, and I still remember, but not with pleasure, the never ending talks and discussions on this number one subject.

Nevertheless time passed very quickly in the "Outside Camps." We sowed and gathered, worked in the onion and tomato fields, picked tomatoes and cherries and were cussing when pulling and topping beets. I worked that summer in Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin. Along Lake Michigan, I went with the bus through Chicago, thus learning more about America.

Most of the farmers were very nice to us. They liked the "German Boys" and brought additional tea, coffee, cigarettes, sandwiches, etc. to the fields. The American guards accompanying each group were mostly older, wounded fighters who did not object to

the farmers gifts and we quickly became friends with them. The main thing was always to come up to the quota, because we were doing piece work. Having reached the quota, we went back to the camp. Then we were paid 80 cents plus 5 cents basic salary per day. For 15 cents we were able to buy a pack of Chesterfield cigarettes in the canteen and other goods of daily need.

I still remember with pleasure my 18th birthday — on September 3rd, 1945 in the outside camp "Dundee" (near Detroit.) On this occasion I did not have to work and the camp leader handed over to me — in the presence of the whole camp — a great cake decorated with 18 candles. All the comrades cheered for me. I was the youngest one in the camp. I even believe at that time I may have been one of the youngest German prisoners of war in the United States.

Then a bad accident happened during our time in "Blissfield" (Michigan.) A truck full of German POWs collided with a train on the way back to camp in the evening. Sixteen comrades, the American guard and the driver were killed on the spot. Eight others were badly wounded. Only one POW survived. A German, one American priest and the Lord Mayor of Blissfield each gave an obituary speech. I still have photos of this memorial ceremony.

Toward the end of 1945 I again worked in the main camp Fort Custer, now in the special department of the hospital for mentally disturbed prisoners and attempted suicides. There were about 8 of these poor guys in this isolation ward. They were no longer able to withstand the pressure of their nerves and had all tried to commit suicide by cutting their wrists of hanging themselves. One of them was on a hunger strike; another one was only praying, etc. It certainly was not a nice command. Three of us were on guard alternately around the clock. It was just necessary to remain awake and to watch.

Nevertheless, one of my comrades fell asleep during the night shift, and when he woke up the bed of comrade Rudolf V. was empty. It was too late. He had made use of the occasion to hang himself in the toilet. What to do now? Our command was dissolved on the spot; we were fired and became jobless.

For days the wildest rumors went around the

camp. The optimists said that we would be repatriated to Germany. The pessimists pointed out that we would be sent to Africa in order to build roads through the deserts. Nobody knew anything for sure, until lists of prisoners to be shipped were put onto the blackboard. Here the word "repatriation" was used for the first time.

In mid-January, 1946 my name appeared on one of these lists. Larger, personal belongings such as books, musical instruments, or works of art made by the individuals could be shipped to Germany separately via the Red Cross or Y.M.C.A. Someone who had too many dollars could pay for a subscription to an American magazine to be sent to his home.

Because of limited space, each prisoner was limited to one seabag. In short, everything looked as if we were to be repatriated. Our morale was correspondingly good.

Shortly afterwards we were at the shipping camp, "Shanks," near New York. Then came the day when we stood ready, about 1000 German prisoners of war, in the Port of New York. We were all newly dressed in black with winter hats and coats. On the black military coats the white, thick letters "PW" shined deeply. Each individual had a seabag full of bursting in front of him and in the background was the Liberty ship "Code Victory" which was to take us back to the home country very soon.

An American officer gave a farewell speech in accent free German. He mentioned free America and the democracy, which we should hopefully bring back to post-war Germany. He said we should not forget America, etc. We were then called up by name and our ticket was placed around our neck. We went up the gangway to the ship while a band played nice melodies as a farewell.

As a final farewell from America the "Liberty Statue" greeted us at the gate of the port of New York, and I swore then to come back to this beautiful America as a free man. As you can see for yourself, I succeeded in coming back.

The return trip on the ship was quite nice; we could move freely on the ship; it had good food and even a cinema. There was even a German newspaper on board, of which I still have a copy. Since we

were not in convoy, the trip took only eight days.

It was a shock for us; we even panicked when at daybreak we saw an old, destroyed water tower in the port with the word "Le Havre." We hadn't reached Germany, but were again at the French coast. A cry of protest went throughout the ship: "Do not leave the ship; all remain on board; we want to go to Germany."

And now we were told a lie. They calmed us down by saying that the north German ports were blocked with ships and we would be transported to our home by rail. Finally military police came on board and we were forced to go on land. On a cold, foggy morning we marched again in a destroyed city. There was no doubt that again we were in the destroyed and hungry Europe of 1946. Our morale was more than bad. The worst rumors were spread about.

Thus we reached finally the repatriation camp for American soldiers, "Phillip Morris", in Bolbec, Normandy. Nevertheless, I still was not willing to believe that the USA had told us a lie and cheated us. Did they really intend to sell us to the French? Unbelievable!

Once in the camp we were called, individually, to an enquiry committee composed of American and French doctors and officers. Everything went very quickly. A few questions concerning age, family and health, a look into the American personal papers and I stood in front of a German clerk, who made new papers, took finger prints and let me sign something in French.

At that time I did not yet understand French. A "Prisoner of War" suddenly changed into a "Prisoner de la Guerre" — PG. I left the room through a second door and suddenly was in a separate camp district guarded by Moroccan soldiers of the French Army. Many of us, especially the elder ones, the family fathers, cried. They were near to despair. I also did not feel like laughing — you can take it from me.

Only about 10% of those in our transport were considered not to be fit for further imprisonment in France due to their health or war wounds. They were, as I heard later, repatriated from Bolbeck to Germany.

Those few days in Bolbec in the American camp "Phillip Morris" were one of the greatest disappointments in my young life. At that time I swore — we all did — never again to believe something said by the Americans. We were fed up with this so-called democracy - with the great liberality of this great nation.

Today I know that the American Government had been put under pressure by their allies - the British and the French. They insisted on the delivery of all prisoners of war in America, once there were no longer used there. The prisoners would be used to rebuild destroyed cities, for cheap labor for the coal mines, for agriculture, and for doing away with mines, bombs and old war materials which had to be found and destroyed. So it happened.

The French went a step further. They shamelessly and unscrupulously made use of our bad situation. Most likely they knew that we had not received any mail in America after this lost war in 1945 and that we did not know anything about our families and about the situation at home. None of us knew definitely whether parents, wives and children were still alive.

Therefore, we were first of all surprised and naturally very happy when we were allowed to send a long letter and several post cards to addresses of our choice in Germany. In the meantime I was again in the same camp I was in in March, 1945. However, this time the camp was under French management - called the Camp PG de Laxe, in Cherbourg. The vicious circle had closed. The French population suffered a lot in 1946. They did not have much to eat or wear. Correspondingly our food in the camp was not good. We were not yet used for doing any kind of work. The rations for 10 men was one loaf of bread, half a liter of watery soup and a cupful of substitute coffee or tea — for the whole day

Now we prisoners, mockingly called the "Americans", were first of all subjected to hunger. In America we were never hungry. These weeks in April, May and June, 1946 in Cherbourg were the worst ones in my life, and I shall never forget them. One who has never suffered from hunger cannot imagine what it means.

In the meantime replies came back slowly to our

letters or postcards — or not. Every one of us prisoners naturally waited for the daily issue of mail, impatiently but also trembling and fearing bad news. Finally I also received a letter. My parents and brother were still alive; they were getting along relatively well; I should not worry; they were waiting for me to return soon, etc. Now I was quite happy, felt relieved and could look forward to the near future. Many of the other prisoners, however, never received a reply. Their letters did not reach their destination. The family members had fled, were expelled from their city, dead or missing — who knew?

Also bad news came back, written by sisters or brothers, neighbors or friends, saying that the parents were dead, the children killed, house and home had been destroyed, the wives had forgotten their long-gone husbands, had a new friend, etc.

There was so much misery in those post-war years. Many of my comrades were now near to desperation. Their courage, kept up with a lot of effort, collapsed like a house of playing cards. Nobody can stand such pressure for along time. It is nearly impossible to describe it. In this moment something terrible, probably calculated by the French Government, happened.

Frequently, during one month delegations of well-fed members of the Foreign Legion looking magnificent in their clean French uniforms with white caps on their heads came into the camp. They were former German soldiers and they gave stirring speeches, describing the life in the Foreign legion in glowing colors. They promised the hungry prisoners immediate good food and drinks, even girls. "Join the French Foreign Legion," they appealed. "Why do you want to starve in this camp and work very hard for years. Come and join us in the Foreign Legion, which is composed to a large part of your former comrades."

Of course none of us poor, hungry boys were thinking of the forthcoming wars in Indochina and Algeria. Thus it was quite clear why many of those comrades who had received no news or only bad news from home volunteered. They volunteered to serve in a foreign army, to serve in the Foreign Legion and thus probably for a heroic death in Indochina or Algeria, for France.

I was lucky. I had had good, encouraging news from home. I had already volunteered once in 1943. I said to myself, "Never again!" However, 25-30% of my comrades volunteered for the Foreign Legion. Many of them never again saw their home country.

We, the rest, worked until the end of 1948 in France. The French population accepted us German prisoners of war without any hatred. Relationships had basically changed since 1945. I worked for nearly three years with a French farmer in Normandy and was treated like a member of the family. I came within a hairs breadth of marrying a nice little French girl. My first great love was in France.

I was asked to talk about my experiences and adventures in United States captivity in 1945 and 1946. I have tried to describe the situation honestly. Time heals all wounds and, thank God, man quickly forgets bad experiences. This is very good, because otherwise how could we live together?

In the meantime the USA and the Federal Republic of Germany have become political friends - which cannot be separated. We again believe in your politics.

For a few years now American and German veterans meet each other on the former battle fields of West Europe, particularly in my part of Germany in Linnich on the Ruhr. We have formed a Committee of Friends and Promoters of the Hubertus Cross and I have the honor to bring you the best regards from this committee. We look after American, English and Canadian friends who come to us each year in Germany, and organize ceremonies in cemeteries to honor all these heroes.

Theirs is the glory!

We have created human contacts and some real friendships have developed. My attitude towards the USA has changed basically. Now we understand and visit each other. I recall with pleasure a scene in the German soldiers' cemetery in Bedburg. A former German POW, with tears in his eyes, asked me to translate to my American friend, Dr. R.M.W., his thanks for the good and fair treatment he received during his captivity in the United States.

With certain pride I also think of the American

General from the 102nd U.S. Infantry Division, the OZARKS, Mr. Bill Douglas, who ended his speech at our meeting in Germany with the words:

"He is a hero who makes his former enemies his friends."

It is with this basic idea that I finish today.



K. Kreiten's photo, from his German Army papers

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Howard and Shirley Knox have received a letter from Anny, a 65 year old resident of Heerlen, Holland in which she asks us to find the person pictured here. He was a GI named Alex. He and his buddy Alfred used to give food to Anny's family back in late 1944, and she would personally like to thank them.

She was a teenager in 1944 but she remembers Alex and Alfred would come back to the rest center in Heerlen. Anny's daddy would play an accordion and sing in Dutch. The GIs would sing along in English. Anny's mother washed the clothes for the GIs. Alex and Alfred would bring them food and "cigarettes" for their Pappa. Anny does not know Alex's last name, but she knows he was from the 102nd and that Alfred drove an armoured vehicle.

Alex, if you are out there, or if Alfred is out there, or if anyone knows Alex's full name and his company, please contact Howard Knox. He will deliver a message from Alex or Alfred when he makes the trip back to Heerlen this September to take part in Heerlen's 50th Anniversary of their liberation. If you have any information on Alex, or Alfred, which he can take with him you would make a Dutch woman by the name of Anny a very happy person.

Howard Knox, VP of the 102nd, 3144 S. Wheeling Way #210, Aurora, CO 80014. 303/755-9356



Does anyone know where to find Alex?
A Dutch family from Heerlen, Holland would like to thank him for his help in late 1944.

James D. Fuller, G-405th, is in a nursing home in Gainesville, TX. Mail to him will be delivered by his son (a postal carrier) if you write to his son's address: 1609 E. Lone Oak Rd., Valley View, TX 76272

Annie L. Hitt (Mrs. **Marcus Hitt, 405-E**) has written to Bob Enkelmann at her husband's request, thanking him for the letter Bob had sent. "It was indeed kind of you to take the time to do this. He enjoyed it very much. Being age 37 when he was drafted into service, he is older than most of the other men who went in at that time. He is 87 now and I am 83. Marcus is almost blind and that handicaps him but he still does some things around the house.

We commend you for all the good work you are doing and hope you will be able to keep it up for many years to come." M.C.Hitt, 11 Hackberry Circle, Tuscaloosa, AL 35401.

Charles Shephard, 407-L, was reported dead in the Jan./Mar.'94 issue of the Notes. He is very much alive because I talked to him just about a week ago. *Paul Chas. Shephard*, 1182 Mill Creek Rd. S.W., Rocky Face, GA 30740.

My husband, **Edward J. Wilson, 379 FA-HQ**, is currently in Arbor Manor Care Center, 151 Second St., Spring Arbor, MI 49238. He had a stroke in April '93 but is doing much better. He would like to receive any cards his fellow Ozark members would like to send. Constance Wilson

James M. English, 405th A/T Hq 1st Bn., of Panama City, FL, has sent us a letter and enclosed a photo of the sign at Buddy Field. The sign says the field is dedicated to Arthur Covaya, Robert Cunis, John Cherry, Arvy Cary and Sonny V. Massanelli. Since three of these men are listed in the history book as having been killed in action, we assume that the field was dedicated and used during occupation.



Anyone know the location of Buddy Field?

Jim says "Our Bn HQs marched up and down to tramp the ground down for Buddy Field, that was to be dedicated. For young GIs it wasn't what we wanted to do, especially with the ground wet with morning dew but we are all proud that we did."

Jim also wrote: "I've been racking my noodle for the name of a GI I was with in Bavaria, Germany. After Nuremberg we at times had to warm the Jeep motor with a heating pad all night to get it started the next morning.

"I recall we rode horseback guard in the mountains. Sometimes we would be trucked 40-50 miles to pull ID checks. Reason - the old American GI couldn't resist being good to the - you guessed it - girls. Of course letting them into the next town. Ha Ha. I also recall the Russians pushing us out of Immenau and we had to spend a week in the mud before moving to a barracks in a glen near a small stream. The bunks were all the way to the ceiling. This was somewhere outside Beyreuth, which was flattened. People were living under ground.

"We moved so much I can hardly remember the towns. I do remember riding on a kitchen truck that moved up the mountain so slow that we moved back as much as we went forward. Then, when we finally made it to the top of the mountain on the way to Passau, the truck had no brakes or gears. We went through Passau so fast I still don't know how we kept from hitting some one. Plus we all had to keep moving from one side of the truck to the other to keep from falling off the mountain.

Many stories are funny now."



We couldn't resist this photo of the "Tall Boy's Club of the 405th". From left to right they are: **Bill Barnett, Joseph Gatto, Warren Heimbach, and Donald Grovert.**

Joe Bogdan, 802 Ord., is doing as well as expected, He has a good mind but still can't talk or walk. He enjoyed the newsletter Howard Knox mailed out, He remembers all the names, Ted (brother-in-law) called out and Joe cried, but then he was fine. We ask questions he answers "yes" or "no" with a head shake. He's still in the nursing home in Donora, PA

Dear Rip:

I was informed by Merril Oaks today that **Walter Hincq of 406-M** passed away last night, March 27, 1994.

Walter was the former coordinator of 406-M and was instrumental in finding over 110 living and deceased members of that company. In the past reunions that I have attended he and his wife were always there and often helped out in the operation of Ozark sales and gave many things for the resale. He informed me at the last reunion that he was having treatments (radiation) for cancer but indicated that his doctors were confident of his full recovery.

We will miss him.

George M. Rohrer, 8928 West Lane
Magnolia, TX 77355

Historically Speaking

The job of historian has been entailing some more current activities than those which happened 50 years ago.

As computer service liaison, I've been involved with the reporting of the newly found Ozarks and the volume of recent new finds has been exhilarating, to say the least. There will be an additional 78 Ozarks in the upcoming roster that weren't on our lists when the last "Notes" was printed. That's almost one a day! A lot of that volume can be credited to George Rohrer and Howard Knox and their CD ROM computer telephone disks. Please see page 2 of this issue and let George know how you can help.

The requests (and checks) for rosters started full blast while I spent two weeks fishing on the Outer Banks of North Carolina. There were 110 requests waiting when I got home, and the mail hasn't slacked off much since. There's a special thanks to every one (almost everyone) who took the time to look up his member number from his label and add it to the

Roster request form. That step saved hours of computer entry time.

We will be having the roster printed and into the mail before you get this issue. We will get a few extra copies made and those will be on sale at the Ozark Stuff table at the reunion - just in case you didn't remember to send in for one. If you are not coming to the reunion, but decide you want a copy of the roster, you will have to send \$6 along with the form on page 3. That extra dollar is the difference between per-piece bulk mail costs, and sending them individually.

On Another Front.....

The newspapers and TV have been doing a big job of covering the history of 50 years ago and the survivors' stories. Photos and stories bring back memories, and that, of course, is why our Ozark Replay was originated back in 1987. We've attempted to not only please our readers but also to chronicle the experiences of our various units. Diversity helps to convey the varied perspectives of each one and each unit of our division.

You'll frequently see a letter or an article which begins: "That article by so-and-so in the last issue of the Notes reminded me of....." and someone else is off and running with a war story of his own. That is exactly what we like.

This editor's wife has been known to threaten an Ozark friend who is recounting a good war story with: "When are you going to write that down and send it to us so we can share it with everyone?" George Rohrer and Ed Blackburn have both been given that word. Maybe she'll take a tape recorder along to the reunion to catch a few stories there.

The Notes are only as good as **you** make them, and **you** are going to have to send in your stories - on paper or tape- to keep the Notes going as strong as these past years' issues indicate it can be.

We're pretty good at deciphering hand written material, and have had practice at transcribing from tapes. And, best of all, the computer knows how to spell and will correct that for us! We've even added the names of a lot of those German towns into its memory so we don't have to look them up every time.

No more excuses. Now we need to hear from **you**.



| Name | Hometown | Unit | Date of death |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|------------|---------------|
| Ainley, Harding | Dukedom, TN | 381 FA -B | Unk. |
| Alexander, Norman | Muskegon, MI | 406-B | 12/91 |
| Angelucci, Louis F. | Silver Springs, MD | 406-L | 11/89 |
| Anthony, James L. | Toms River, NJ | 406-K | 1992 |
| Aronoff, Lawrence | Toledo, OH | 102 QM | 1992 |
| Belter, August H. | St. Louis, MO | 406-D | 11/1/92 |
| Bastis, Joseph J. | Brooklyn, NY | 406-B | 1992 |
| Benford, James W. | Eaton, GA | 406-K | 5/1/93 |
| Blau, Kenneth | Hollendale, FL | 406 HQ-3 | 6/93 |
| Bond, Claude L. | Saylorsburg, PA | 406-K | 11/25/80 |
| Brewster, Virgil J. | Mesquite, TX | 927 FA-A | 4/9/94 |
| Crisse, Roland V. | Novato, CA | 327 Med. A | 7/26/83 |
| Cardwell, Francis L. | Baltimore, MD | 327 Med.B | Unk. |
| Ciraso, Anthony R. | S. Lincoln, MA | 406-B | Unk. |
| Clark, Raymond H. | Loveland, CO | 327 Med. A | 4/10/82 |
| Dowgiallo, Alex T. | Taylor, PA | 407-B | 4/81 |
| Durr, Roy | Harronsburg, KY | 327 Med.C | 5/83 |
| Erdman, Donald L. | Holland, OH | 406 A/T | 6/7/92 |
| Fanelli, Andrew | Newark, NJ | 406-D | 11/2/81 |
| Gibson, Herbert C. | Denver, CO | 406-I | 1/28/85 |
| Goyne, Harold T. | Chester, VA | 102 QM | 1992 |
| Gruhlke, Vincent W. | Monticello, WI | 407-B | 4/2/91 |
| Hannon, Russell E. | Bedford, IA | 406-I | 6/84 |
| Hargis, Gerald | Denver, CO | 381 FA-A | 1980 |
| Henson, George S. | Buena Vista, VA | 406-D | 1/2/90 |
| Hinck, Walter B. | Waverly, OH | 406-M | 3/27/94 |
| Horoszewski, Walter | Toledo, OH | 406-G | 1994 |
| Hunter, Therrell | Quanah, TX | 405-B | 5/13/94 |
| Huseby, Earl M. | Chicago, IL | 405-F | 1/24/66 |
| Kark, Frederick L. | Lewiston, MI | 406-B | 1989 |
| Klein, Earl W. | Pittsburgh, PA | 407-I | 1986 |
| Kuras, John C. Sr. | Palos Park, IL | 405-A | 11/93 |
| Kennedy, Richard | East Liverpool, OH | 380 FA-A | 1966 |
| Knapp, William R. | Tobyhanna, PA | 407-HQ | 5/19/94 |
| Kyllo, Palmer J. | Wanamingo, MN | 407-F | 5/94 |
| Lagerberg, Vincent O. (Lt.) | Newport, RI | 406-B | Unk. |
| Lanahan, Thomas W. | Bumpass, VA | 327 Med.A | 12/8/91 |
| Lay, Harold A. | Brick, NJ | 327 Eng. B | 2/13/94 |
| Lance, John E. (Lt.) | Knoxville, TN | 406-B | KIA-Korea |
| Loflin, Glenn L. | Clay Center, KS | 380 FA-A | 5/3/81 |

| | | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------|------------|----------|
| Lucas, Edward J. | Newburg, NY | 406-B | 1983 |
| Lucks, John A. | Ballwin, MO | 405-B | 11/6/91 |
| Marcoux, Raymond G. | Lawrence, MA | 406-I | 1980 |
| Marisi, Albert | Jackson, NJ | 407-B | 9/27/87 |
| Matteri, Frank A. | Petaluma, CA | 406-L | 6/16/82 |
| McCracken, Ernest A. | Jonesboro, AR | 380 FA-A | 1982 |
| Menichiello, Raphael | Port Reading, NJ | 380 FA-A | 7/12/87 |
| Mochlenkamp, William | University City, MO | 406-D | 10/2/87 |
| Morris, H. | Emporia, KS | 405-H | 5/14/93 |
| Mossburgh, Thomas D. | Clay Center, KS | 102 QM | 4/30/94 |
| Neri, Frank | Arlington, MA | 407-I | 11/15/79 |
| Owens, James E. | Cincinnati, OH | 407-B | 2/14/93 |
| Pavek, Edwin A. | St. Paul, MN | 406-D | 1993 |
| Pinter, Lee R. | Walnut Grove, MS | 102-QM | 4/22/85 |
| Raney, William R. | Holland, KY | 102-QM | 6/29/83 |
| Ravencroft, Chester A. | Boulder, CO | 405-I | 6/87 |
| Ritson, George W. | Muscataine, IA | 406-C | 6/1/78 |
| Romero, Louis | Denver, CO | 327 Med.-A | Unk. |
| Ross, Alfred E. | Madeson, CT | 406-HQ-1 | 1/12/88 |
| Rottman, Edward | Munhall, PA | 407-B | 6/26/92 |
| Sage, Thurman K. | Union City, TN | 407-HQ | 2/7/94 |
| Saxon, Rabun | Jacksonville, FL | 405-B | 2/25/79 |
| Senneff, Paul G. | Lansing, IA | 327 Eng.-C | 4/17/94 |
| Schlotthauer, Edward J. | Gerring, NB | 927 FA-HQ | 3/21/94 |
| Shackelford, Fred R. | N. Wilson, NC | 406-B | 1/27/94 |
| Skaggs, Thomas F. Jr. | Fort Payne, AL | 405-B | 10/26/72 |
| Skalkos, Andrew G. (B.Gen) | Hamilton, OH | 406-G | 2/18/94 |
| Skrinjar, John | Euclid, OH | 406-G | 6/14/94 |
| Smithers, Virgil L. | Robbins, TX | 406-B | 4/20/84 |
| Snyder, Eugene P. | Dunedin, FL | 406 HQ-2 | 3/22/94 |
| Stemberski, Stanley S. | Unk. | 407-H | 6/45 |
| Swanson, Frank E. Jr. | Clear Lake, IA | 406-G | Unk. |
| Sutter, Joseph W. | Cleveland, OH | 102 QM | 1987 |
| Taylor, John B. | Senora, NC | 406 A/T | 10/10/93 |
| Vonderburg, Marvin | Plant City, FL | 405-B | 4/26/94 |
| Wade, Harry M. | Talmadge, AL | 102 QM | 1970s |
| Whitmeyer, Ivan C. | Rome, NY | 102 QM | 1972 |
| Wist, Thaddeus R. | Villa Park, IL | 802 Ord. | 7/2/86 |
| Wood, Carroll B. | Alpharetta, GA | 802 Ord. | 4/6/88 |
| Yaps, Edward C. | Milford, CT | 380 FA-A | Unk. |
| Younglund, Basil M. | VA Hosp., CA | 327 Med-D | 1975 |

Membership Cards

The treasurer continues to get requests (demands!) for membership cards. Your membership card was the right hand portion of your membership renewal card. You should have filled out the proper information on that segment and kept it.

Sorry, friends, but there is no way that separate membership cards are going to be sent out to over 3,000 members. The cost would come to almost \$900 and your officers feel that money can be put to better use elsewhere.



102nd Infantry Division Association
"The Ozarks"

James McGinnis, Secretary

1406 Abbott St.

Muncie, IN 47303

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Members of the communications platoon, Hq. Co. 1st Bn, 406 Inf. in Gereonsweiler, Germany after the town was taken. First row (l. to r.): Charles Ward, Maurice Reardon; 2nd row: Ed Pollard, Bob Bloom, Stafford, Otto Kowallis, Ericsson; Top Row: George Eglar
Photo courtesy of Maurice Reardon