



Florida Senator Bill Nelson presents Dr. Tonyia Gibbons medals for her father, Sgt Jack Sayre (Hq Co-317th) who was killed in action December 24, 1944. [Photo by Keith Burrows]

“It’s Never Too Late”

by Andrew Z. Adkins III

DR. TONYIA GIBBONS was only 11 months old when her father, Sgt Jack Frances Sayre (Hq Co-317th), was killed on Christmas Eve, 1944 during the Battle of the Bulge. It took Dr. Gibbons only 65 years to ask about her father, but this past November 11, 2009, Florida Senator Bill Nelson awarded this grateful daughter of a fallen World War II veteran her father’s medals during a moving Veteran’s Day ceremony in downtown Orlando in front of the “The Battle of the Bulge” monument. There were five veterans including Virgil Myers and Francis Rajnicek of the 80th Division to take part in the presentation.

Dr. Gibbons, a retired psychologist and hearing specialist, received eight different medals from Senator Nelson. He actually presented her with her father’s Bronze Star and the Purple Heart and read off the other medals. He also read the Citation that went along with the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart.

Both Virgil Myers and Francis Rajnicek spoke about the Battle of the Bulge and the horrendous conditions. The Senator then presented Dr. Gibbons with a Flag that had been flown over the U.S. Capitol. Then BG Carlson and another veteran from the local Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge Chapter gave the granddaughter a similar Flag. It turned out to be a very moving ceremony.

The local newspaper was there, a representative from the Army News, CBS TV, Fox TV, and local Channel 9 attended the event.

This journey of love started in the summer of 2007 when Dr. Gibbons was watching Ken Burns’ documentary, *The War*. “When I saw the segment about the Battle of the Bulge, something clicked,” said

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Secretary/Editor: Andrew Z. Adkins III (H-317, Family)
2121 N.W. 54th Terrace
Gainesville, FL 32605-3392
352-377-8813 email: adkins@80thdivision.com

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

NATIONAL OFFICERS 2009-2010

National Commander CSM Donald Stewart (Ret, IT Div Hqs)
792 Pine Run Road
Apollo, PA 15613 / 724-727-3928

Sr. Vice Commander PNC Max R. Schmidt (G-317)
1716 Noble Place
Greensboro, NC 27408-2614 / 336-288-0983

2nd Vice Commander Dr. Lee S. Anthony (F-317 WWI, Family)
3779 Carvins Cove Road
Salem, VA 24153 / 540-563-0165

3rd Vice Commander LTC Grant R. Porter (80th TASS)
6730 Manor Gate Drive
Midlothian, VA 23112 / 804-377-6358

Secretary/Editor	Andrew Z. Adkins III (H-317, Family)
Chaplain	PNC Angelo J. Barone (L-317)
Judge Advocate	Dempsey J. Prappas (AT-317)
Historian	Bruce Smith (WW I, Family)
Service Officer	LTC Kelly J. Niernberger (80th TASS)
Flag Sergeant	Roger Nelson (WW I Eng Reg, Family)
Color Sergeant	Travis Edwards (80th TASS)
Sergeant-at-Arms	Bert R. Marsh (M-319)
Public Affairs Officer	HNC George V. West (C-318)
Division Photographer	Tom Pappas (F-318)

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Laverne Schock (F-317)
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EDITOR'S NOTES

by Andrew Z. Adkins III, National Secretary

CORRECTIONS - Blue Ridge Post-Reunion Issue

OK, OK, I was trying to get the September Blue Ridge done and to our extraordinary editor before Becky & I took off for a two-week excursion to Alaska. But, while that was a good excuse for me, I'd like to make a few corrections from this past Post-Reunion issue of the *Blue Ridge Service Magazine*.

LADIES AUXILIARY OFFICERS FOR 2009-1010:

President - Kay Rajnicek
1st Vice - Helen Pietsch
Treasurer - Naomi Brockman
Chaplain - Margaret Schock
Historian - open
Secretary - Alice Schmidt
Sgt at Arms - Kay Barone

POST REUNION NOTES

In the Post-Reunion issue of the *Blue Ridge*, the name of the previous National Service Officer was listed incorrectly. PNC Felix Cistolo had held that position from 1977 to 2009 and during that those years had contacted ABMC to provide the floral arrangements for overseas cemeteries for each Memorial Day observance. He also helped with trying to locate members of the 80th and legacy of the division. In addition to those duties, he also took care of arranging the PNPs and PNCs and marching them in at the annual Reunion Memorial Service and also aided the Sergeant-at-Arms as the wreath was brought forward for presentations. These latter two duties were appointed by the Commander, they are not elected positions. Felix consistently was appointed to these positions from 1967 to 2009. Apologies are extended to PNC Cistolo for this oversight.

Announcements

Barbara Brockman writes: "During the recent 80th Reunion in Pittsburgh and since his return, Dad (PNC Clarence Brockman) has been asked by several WWII Vets where he got his CIB baseball cap. I was wondering if in the next Blue Ridge you could put a small note as to how the men could buy one or if a family member wanted to get them one for Christmas." You can find them on the Internet at <http://www.medalsusa.com>. Look for them under "Army Hats - Ball Caps."

ROBERT T. MURRELL has moved. His new address is:

166 Cambridge Lane
Lewistown, PA 17044-9315
Telephone 717-242-3942



A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDER

Season's Greetings

Greetings Veterans, Soldiers, Family and Friends, much has happened this past year. Like the seasons, the 80TH Division Veterans Association family is changing. The Descendants Organization voted at the 2009 Reunion in August to merge with the Association and most recently in September, the 80TH Division Blue Ridge Association polled their membership and agreed to become a Post of the Veterans Association. As the 80TH Division Veterans Association evolved from the World War I soldiers and families to include the World War II soldiers and families, now the torch is being passed to all who have ever worn the three peaked patch, their families and friends. This opening of the ranks will ensure the longevity of this time

honored organization for generations to come and also ensure the Honor and legacy of those who have gone before us.

Before I sign off, a quick update on the movement of the Monument at Ft Benning. PNC Archer Futch did an excellent job negotiating with the Museum Staff and the Columbia Monument Company. Archer's efforts have ensured a very good location as near as possible to the new Museum front and the entrance to the Walk of Honor Garden. The initial payment has been made for the relocation and construction of the 15' X 15' concrete pad and the Columbia Monument Company expects to begin construction next spring. Thanks again to Archer for a job well done.

Welcome to all the new members and congratulations on a truly historic past year.

Wishing all Good Health and a Happy Holiday Season.

Stay Safe and Warm

Respectfully,

"Only Moves Forward"

"Strength of the Mountains"

National Commander, Donald W. Stewart

Buchenwald - 65th Anniversary of the Liberation

by **Andrew Z. Adkins III**

I've just received an open invitation from Prof. Dr. Volkhard Knigge, Foundation Director of the Foundation of the Buchenwald and Mittelbau Dora Memorial. Prof Knigge is inviting any 80th Division WWII Veterans who were directly involved in the liberation of the Buchenwald concentration camp just outside of Weimar, Germany on April 11, 1945 to participate in the remembrance ceremony of the 65th anniversary of the liberation, which will be held April 9-14, 2010. All of the costs of travel to Germany and accommodations would be covered by the memorial site. The following is the letter from Prof. Knigge:

07.12.09

To whom it may concern,

In April of 2010, the 65th Anniversary of the liberation of Buchenwald and its subcamps will be approaching. During a meeting session last year, the survivors of the Buchenwald camp system opted to dedicate this year's Anniversary to the rescue effort which subsequently saved more than 900 children and youth from Buchenwald, facilitated by organized resistance of the prison-

ers as well as by the efforts of soldiers of the U.S. Army. Participation in the remembrance ceremony of the 65th Anniversary of the liberation should therefore include not only former camp prisoners, but also veterans of the U.S. Army who contributed to the liberation as well as the subsequent care of the surviving prisoners.

We are directing our request to your organisation in the hopes of finding these veterans and establishing contact with them, in order to invite them to Weimar and Buchenwald between 9-14 of April, 2010, so long as their health status permits. Of course, the Foundation of the Buchenwald and Mittelbau Dora Memorial Sites would assume all the subsequent costs connected to the event.

I would greatly appreciate a brief response to this letter, possible through e-mail (pneumann@buchenwald.de) or fax (0049 3643 430100),

Kind regards,

Prof. Dr. Volkhard Knigge
Foundation Director

80th Blue Ridge Army Reserve Association

By Paul D. Hoppes, President

On October 17th and 18th the 80th Blue Ridge Army Reserve Association held its 8th Annual Meeting in Richmond at the Sheraton Richmond West Hotel.

The morning of the 17th, the Association held a golf tournament at The Crossings Golf Course in Glen Allen, VA and at the same time had tours of the Tredegar Iron Works, The American Civil War Center at Historic Tredegar, and the Virginia Holocaust Museum.

Saturday evening was the Association dinner with BG Leslie Purser, Deputy Chief, Army Reserve, Human Capital Core Enterprise from OCAR. She gave us an overview of how Human Capital is being reviewed and an insight into the direction it is taking in the Army Reserve. It was a great time to see all our friends in the 80th.

Sunday morning was the annual breakfast and business meeting; the secretary reported that we have the following membership:

- 103 Active Members (45 Life and 57 Annual)
- 112 Inactive Members to include one Board Member

A discussion was held in reference to developing a Strength of the Mountains Society. This would be a society for past and future 80th soldiers and civilians that would reflect outstanding service to the 80th. A draft document has been developed and is being reviewed by the Board of Directors and Officers of the Association for content and qualifications.

It was outlined that the Association is sponsoring a memorial at Division Headquarters. The estimated cost is \$3,400.00. The members present voted to provide seed money for this memorial and it would be announced at the Commanders Conference (21 - 23 Jan 2010) at Virginia Beach that the Association would contribute \$500 to this fund. The memorial would have a Bronze Sponsorship Plaque with the names of individuals or Organizations who gave to the Memorial. We currently have \$1,500.00 in contribution from MG McLaren, Dr. Lee Anthony, and the 80th Blue Ridge Army Reserve Association.

It was announced that Mr. Eugene O'Neil, Commander of the 80th Division Veterans Association, had recently passed away and that the Board through a conference call had authorized \$100.00 be sent from the Association to the McBride Scholarship Fund in Mr. O'Neil's name. The Association sent a card to Mrs. O'Neil indicating we had made this donation.

The major item during the business meeting was the report and comments on the meeting held in Carlisle, PA concerning the merger of the three organizations: 80th Division Veterans Association, Descendants of 80th Division Veterans, and the 80th Blue Ridge Army Reserve Association.

The history of this subject was outlined and Grant Porter made a presentation to the members about the proposal. Grant outlined the following questions about the proposal and presented the proposal for review and approval of the membership present at the meeting

With us joining the 80th Veterans Association, all life members will be accepted into the 80th Veterans Association at no charge; all other members will be charged a fee which will be paid by the Blue Ridge Association. Now would be the time to join the 80th Blue Ridge Army Reserve Association and become a member of both organizations and continue the history of the 80th.

After discussion it was voted that the 80th Blue Ridge Association would request to become a Post in the 80th Division Veterans Association National Organization. It was moved by COL (P) Linkenhoker and seconded by Dr. Lee Anthony. The vote was 100% in favor. It was also noted that we would not do this until 15 February 2010, because this would allow us time to review our By-Laws and collect our dues for our Association.

It was determined that the Association's By-Laws will be reviewed by 1 December 2009 and updated by January. The review will include dues and other issues that need updating.

The following people were nominated and elected to the Board of Directors: MSG Michael Atkins (11), CSM Doris Wollett (11), LTC Colleen Watson (11), LTC Erik Imajo (11), LTC Terence Singleton (11).

Next year's meeting was proposed and agreed upon to have it in Arlington, VA in conjunction with the 80th Division Veterans Association annual meeting, which will be August 11-15, 2010 at the Sheraton National Hotel in Arlington, VA.

EDITORS NOTE: See "2010 Reunion Information on page 8 in this Newsletter."

The members at the meeting approved the following awards that will be given out at the Commanders Conference in January: (1) NCO of the Year, (2) Instructor of the Year, (3) Soldier of the Year, (4) AGR of the Year, (5) Civilian of the year. The Association will award each recipient with a check for \$200.

Paul D. Hoppes
President, 80th Blue Ridge Army Reserve Association

80th Division - Generational Project #1: Oral History Project

THE MISSION: For the children, grandchildren, nieces, and nephews of 80th Division veterans: your mission over the next six months is to conduct an Oral History of your father, grandfather, or uncle who served in the 80th Division. This is NOT limited to WWII veterans; we want to gather as much history as we can from all 80th Division veterans. You may be surprised—the conversation may change your life.

Here's a Step-by-Step Procedure for Conducting an Oral History

1. Develop a list of initial questions. Focus on the basics, such as:

- a. *What branch of the service did he serve?* Most of the 80th Division veterans served with the U.S. Army, but I would not be surprised if several veterans served with another branch such as the Marines or the Navy.
- b. *What was his rank?* In most cases, an enlisted man joins the Army as a private and works his way up through promotions. Officers start as 2d Lieutenants and work their way up through promotions.
- c. *Did he join the 80th as a replacement soldier?* The 80th entered the ETO (European Theatre of Operation) in July 1944 when they arrived in Scotland. They hit the beaches of Normandy the first week of August 1944. Anyone joining the 80th Division after that time would be considered a replacement.
- d. *In what unit did he serve?* In the 80th Division during WWII, there were three rifle regiments (317th, 318th, 319th), four Field Artillery Battalions (313th, 314th, 905th, 315th), and a number of other support units (80th Reconnaissance Troop, 305th Engineer Combat Battalion, 305th Medical Battalion, 780th Ordnance Light Maintenance Company, 80th Quartermaster Company, 80th Signal Company, Military Police Platoon, Headquarters Company, and the Band). He may have served in more than one unit. Also, note the company he was in: for every rifle regiment, there are three battalions, each with three rifle companies and one heavy weapons company.
- e. *Was he awarded any medals?* If so, what medals and does he have the official citations that came with the award? While the citation would be “official,” ask him about the circumstances. This may be a tough one (see below), but it would help explain the story.
- f. *In what campaigns did he participate?* During WWII, the 80th Division participated in four campaigns: Northern France, Rhineland, Ardennes-Alsace, and Central Europe.

2. Keep in mind there are typically three “phases” of your veteran’s history:

- a. *Before action:* This is where he learned to become a soldier. Initial training, then training for his particular

MOS (Military Occupational Specialty), though not everyone had specific training, then training with the unit.

- b. *Action:* The 80th Division spent 277 days in continuous combat. Many veterans fought with the 80th Division from the time the division landed on Utah Beach in early August until the end of the war on May 7, 1945. This will be the toughest part of the interview.
- c. *After the war:* Many veterans came home in one piece; others, not so lucky. But all veterans came home a different person than when they went over. It’s also important to try to understand how the war shaped their lives and what they did after the war.

3. Conduct the interview - this is where you get to talk to your veteran and ask specific questions. You’ve got your initial set of questions (see examples below), but you may find you want to ask more questions that take you into a different direction during the interview—be flexible. That’s fine and you should go with the flow. You’ve got to be interested in your veteran’s story and learn to adapt to the conversation. There is no book to read on how to do this, though there are lots of resources; you just learn by experience. If you’re interviewing your father or grandfather, be patient (both of you). These men grew up without computers, some without telephones—a proud generation that grew up not showing their emotions.

A FEW TIPS FOR YOU

- Before the Interview, do a little research:

Does your veteran have any papers or documents from the Army? The discharge papers will provide a lot of information. Some veterans filed their papers with the local clerk of the court, many of which are online.

Does he have a scrapbook, or any photos from the time?

Does he have the letters he wrote home?

- When you conduct the interview, try to avoid background noises, such as phones, TVs, radios, noisy pets.
- Write your initial set of questions down and share them with your 80th Division veteran. If you don’t have a script, your conversation may go all over the place. Also, letting your veteran know what you’ll be asking will give him a chance to think about and reflect what he’s going to say; he may also have several other questions to suggest you ask.
- If you can get one, use an audio recorder, preferably digital. You can try to record using a video recorder, but the veteran may be self-conscious about what he looks like rather than what he’s saying. Many older people don’t want pictures or videos of themselves, so using audio is less intrusive and makes the person more comfortable. It’s also easier, less expensive, and less time-consuming.

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A digital recorder allows you to store the voice file onto the computer and playback using the computer. This is especially important when you transcribe (or have someone else transcribe) the interview. On the other hand, a video of the oral history interview would be a treasure for you and your family. Set the microphone six to twelve inches from the veteran. *Test the audio (or video if you're videotaping) before you start.*

- *Conduct the interview in a safe, comfortable environment.* Try to interview the veteran at his home, where he's more comfortable. Before you start the interview, spend a few minutes talking about the interview in general, how it will proceed, and what you're going to ask. You don't necessarily want to just jump in there and start asking questions.

- *Don't rush the interview.* Most veterans like to talk about themselves, but not about everything. Begin the interview by asking some of the basic questions outlined below, then transition into more specific questions. To do this right, expect to conduct the oral history interview

over a period of time. It will probably take more than an hour or two and you may want to break it into several different interviews.

- *Don't interrupt.* It's not your job to comment on what the veteran is saying, but to record the memories. Remember, you're asking someone to bring back memories (some may be difficult and emotional) that happened 65+ years ago. If you get stuck on a question, or in an awkward moment, ask him what the weather was like or were there any particular sights or smells he remembers.

- *Ask the veteran's permission* to send this Oral History to the 80th Division Veterans Association.

- *Be sensitive.* There are some taboo subjects that your veteran may not want to talk about—at least not up front. The subject of killing is difficult, but what probably hurts more is the subject of lost buddies. If your veteran gets upset or emotional as they tell their story, you should react and show concern. Give him time to recuperate. You may even suggest taking a break after acknowledging this tough moment.

BEFORE THE ACTUAL INTERVIEW, ANNOUNCE THE FOLLOWING ONTO THE AUDIO TAPE:

- Name of the veteran.
- His or her birthdate.
- War served in & branch of service.
- Highest rank achieved.
- Date, city & state of recording.
- The interviewer's name and relationship, if any, to the veteran. Also, the name of anyone else present assisting with the interview.
- The interview conducted for the 80th Division Veterans Association.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS TO ASK THE VETERAN:

1. Initial set of biographical questions
 - a. Where were you born?
 - b. When were you born?
 - c. What did you do before entering the service?
 - d. Are there any other family members who served in the military?
2. Before Action
 - a. Did you enlist in the Army, were you drafted, or nationalized?
 - i. If enlisted, why and the reason for choosing the Army?
 - ii. When did you join?
 - iii. Where (city & state) did you join?
 - b. Were you an officer or enlisted man?
 - c. What was the initial pay back then?

- d. Where did you receive basic training?
 - e. Did you receive any training other than basic?
 - f. When did you join the 80th Division?
 - g. What unit were you in? (Regiment, Battalion, Company, Platoon, Squad)
 - i. Where was your unit when you joined? Were you a replacement?
 - ii. What was your job?
 - h. How did you get to Europe? Can you describe the trip and conditions?
 - i. What did you do during the crossing? What kind of activities to keep busy?
 - ii. How was the food?
 - iii. Do you remember anything outstanding about the trip?
3. During the War
 - a. How did you cross the English Channel?
 - i. What was the mood of the troops?
 - b. When did you first see action?
 - c. Do you remember when you first fired your weapon?
 - i. If so, can you describe?
 - d. Do you remember when you were first shot at?
 - i. If so, can you describe?
 - e. Were you wounded?

- i. Where (location)?
 - ii. Where (on your body)?
 - iii. Describe what happened, what you and your unit were doing.
 - iv. Was anyone else wounded at that same time?
 - v. Where were you treated? Battalion Aid Station? Further back?
 - vi. When did you return to your unit?
 - vii. Was it the same unit?
- f. Did you get any furloughs or passes?
 - i. When?
 - ii. Where (location)?
 - iii. How long?
 - g. Did you have any close friends during the war?
 - i. Did they make it back?
 - ii. If not, can you describe what happened?
 - h. How did you stay in touch with family and friends back home?
 - i. How often did you write?
 - ii. How often did you receive letters or packages?
 - i. Did you ever capture any prisoners?
 - i. If so, can you describe?
 - ii. What were they like?
 - iii. Did you talk with any of them?
 - j. Were you ever captured?

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- i. When?
- ii. Where?
- iii. How long were you a POW?
- iv. How did you escape or were you released?
- k. Were you in the Battle of Argentan?
 - i. Where was your unit?
 - ii. What do you remember about that battle?
- l. Were you in the Moselle River crossing?
 - i. Where was your unit?
 - ii. What do you remember about that battle?
- m. Were you in the Battle of the Bulge?
 - i. Where was your unit?
 - ii. Can you describe the weather?
 - iii. What did you do all day when not fighting?
 - iv. What did you eat and how often?
- n. Were you in the Sauer River crossing to the Siegfried Line?
 - i. Where was your unit?
 - ii. What do you remember about that crossing?
- o. Were you in the Rhine River crossing?
 - i. Where was your unit?
 - ii. What do you remember about that crossing?
- p. Were you in any other major battles?
 - i. Where was your unit?
 - ii. What do you remember about that battle?
- q. Were you or your unit ever under “friendly fire?”
 - i. Where was your unit?
 - ii. Was anyone hurt?
 - iii. Can you describe the circumstances?
- r. Did you take part in the liberation of any concentration camps?
 - i. Which one(s)?
 - ii. Can you describe the camp conditions?
 - iii. Do you remember the date of liberation?
 - iv. How long were you there?
 - v. What did you do?
- s. Where were you when the war ended?
 - i. Can you remember the mood of the troops?
 - ii. How long after you received word that the war ended before you moved out to another location?
 - t. What was the highest rank you attained?
 - u. Did you receive any medals or awards?
 - i. Which ones?
 - ii. Can you describe the action?
 - iii. Which one is the most valuable to you?
- 4. After the War
 - a. Did you remain with the 80th after V-E day (May 7, 1945)?
 - b. Were you part of the occupation force?
 - c. Where were you?
 - d. What did you do?
 - e. When did you get back home?
 - f. How did you get back home?
 - g. What did you do after the war?
 - h. Have you stayed in contact with other 80th Division veterans?
- 5. Reflections
 - a. How did the war affect your life?
 - b. What did you learn from the war?
 - c. Have you talked much about the war with your family?
 - i. If not, why not?

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU'RE DONE WITH THE INTERVIEW

First of all, you will probably be exhausted as will the veteran—it's natural, especially if any of the interview was emotional. Thank the veteran for his time and his service to this great country of ours. The next steps are to review the interview. If you've done an audio or video interview, you want to take some time to digest the information; it's ok, there's no rush.

Once you've had time to rest and digest, you'll want to transcribe the interview. In other words, you'll listen to the recording and type out the interview. Usually, the transcription takes the form of:

QUESTION (or your name as the interviewer): Here's the question I asked (verbatim).

ANSWER (or the veteran's name): Here's the answer by the veteran.

This is an important step, since this becomes the recorded Oral History. It will take time, especially if you've done a quality job. You want to make sure that you type the questions and answers in the order in which you conducted the interview. After you've typed it all out, review for spelling and grammar errors. Then, you'd probably like to share it with the veteran. He may have remembered something else, or after reading the interview, may need to make a change or two. This is very common and it is courteous.

Once you are comfortable with the interview and the Oral History, you'll want to send it (either e-mail or postal mail) to:

80th Division Veterans Association
 Andrew Z. Adkins III,
 National Secretary
 2121 N.W. 54th Terrace
 Gainesville, FL 32605-3392
 Adkins@80thdivision.com

Additional Resources:

The Library of Congress - Veteran's History Project: www.loc.gov/vets

Funded by the United States Congress, this project focuses on providing information and resources to record histories of veterans of the United States Military.

Rutgers Oral History Archives of World War II: fas-history.rutgers.edu/oralhistory/orlhom.htm

Records the personal experiences of men and women who served on the homefront and overseas; based on in-depth interviews of individuals who lived through World War II, beginning with an initial target group of Rutgers College alumni and Douglass College alumnae (formerly, New Jersey College for Women). Currently features about 238 oral history interviews. Interviews are searchable with Google search engine.

www.thetroubleshooters.com/ww2:

Patton's "Troubleshooters" and the story of the 702nd Tank Battalion; includes links to several sites dealing with personal reminiscences.

US Veterans Friends - Luxembourg Tour: June 2010

By Virgil Myers

This year the Celebrations for the USVF will be a bit different. The Celebrations will be to honor the 65th Anniversary of the end of WW II. The first three days will be spent in France. We will stay at the Hotel in Thionville, located about 50 miles south of Luxembourg City. It is located in what is referred to as the Moselle River Valley. We will then return to Luxembourg to the Euro Hotel for the remainder of the Celebrations.

Celebrations start on the 16th of June, 2010. This means you should plan to arrive at the Luxembourg City airport the morning of June 15th if at all possible, before noon. You will be met by someone from Luxembourg. You may be asked to remain at the airport for other members to arrive so you can all be taken to Thionville by a small bus or van. More details on these arrangements will be forthcoming as plans develop. As you make your flight arrangements, notify Virgil Myers with the airline, flight number, and arrival time to the Luxembourg City airport.

You cannot fly directly from the US to Luxembourg City unless they have changed schedules this year.

YOU WILL FLY INTO ONE OF THE FOLLOWING EUROPEAN AIRPORTS, then take a feeder line on into Luxembourg City; these flights are commonly called the City Hoppers.

FRANKFURT, Germany - A very nice but BIG airport.

AMSTERDAM, Netherlands - Big, but easy airport to maneuver; all in a straight line building,

PARIS, France - A very confusing place to fly in and out of, I think.

LONDON, England/Gatwick (If you fly into Heathrow, you will have to take a bus or train to Gatwick) - usually a long layover to Luxembourg City here. Check on flight times to Luxembourg City.

ZURICH, Switzerland - A much smaller airport, but easier to get around in to City Hopper line.

They are asking that anyone 83 years old and not in excellent health to please have someone with you to make medical decisions if they should become necessary.

If the planes are on time, you will usually have at least 1-1/2 hours between flights. This sounds like a lot of time but remember you have to go through Customs.

A TIP—swallow your pride and request a WHEELCHAIR from the arrival gate to your departure gate to Luxembourg City. When you secure your ticket, ask for a wheelchair to be there for you. I guarantee you this TIP will get you through Customs—through a special line for wheelchairs and their party. A small gratuity is proper, though you don't have to give one.

Everyone needs to make their own flight arrangements to Luxembourg City. We all meet over there the first evening (15th June). When you secure your tickets, let Virgil know what time you arrive into Luxembourg City and on what flight, from what city, etc. He will arrange the transportation to the Hotel for you.

You do not have to worry about transportation for the entire time you are with the USVF Celebrations. They furnish a modern tour bus that picks you up at the Hotel in the morning and brings you back at night, sometimes near 11 PM after a big banquet.

ONE CAUTION—when they tell you the night before what time the bus will pick you up at the hotel, if they say 9 AM that is the time they mean—they are punctual for they have a schedule for the day to meet and they will not wait for you if you over sleep or are just slow. You will be expected to catch a taxi to catch up with the bus, and they are not cheap!

If you want me to, I will be glad to make the contact with the USVF for your hotel reservations and confirm back to you. You will not get a confirmation number, just an e-mail telling you that you have a room fitting your request.

I suggest you start now inquiring about your ticket. Most people purchase them 5 to 6 months before the date you leave. If you are worried about a health problem, buy insurance to cover your ticket. This covers a health emergency but not just a decision to not go. Most tickets are sold without a refund unless you request one of that type.

I have been told this would probably be the last big Celebration planned by the USVF of Luxembourg. So don't miss it. You can e-mail me at any time for information or call me at the number below.

Sincerely, Gerald Virgil Myers
863-686-2121 / virg2121@yahoo.com

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80th Legacy Program

Gentlemen,

The Soldiers of the 80th Training Command (TASS) would like to build closer relationships with us. If you would like to receive contact from them in person or by letter, phone or email, they would like to contact you. This offer is pure voluntary and is intended to be information and fun. If you are interested, our new 3rd Vice Commander, LTC Grant Porter, will coordinate to match you up with a Soldier who will contact you. I think this venture can build spirit de corps, promote the 80th legacy, and unite our organizations at the same time. Please send the information below to:

80th Legacy Program
Grant Porter
6730 Manor Gate Drive
Midlothian, VA 23112
gpmailtime@yahoo.com

If you have any questions about this program contact LTC Grant Porter at 804-377-6358.

Rank: _____

Unit: _____

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Address: _____

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State: _____ Zip: _____

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2010 Reunion Information

by Max Schmidt, 2010 Reunion Chairman

The 91st Annual Reunion of the 80th Division Veterans Association is set to take place August 11-15, 2010 at the Sheraton National Hotel, located in Arlington, Virginia.

Max has been “working” with the hotel staff and has “negotiated” a phenomenal room price of \$89 (plus tax) per night. This includes parking at the hotel, which is located in the hotel garage. The hotel also offers free shuttles to/from Reagan National Airport and to/from the Pentagon City Metro system.

The room rate is good for up to three days before and three days after the reunion, in case you’d like to come early or stay later. Best of all, if you bring the kids or grandkids, up to four people can stay in the same room for no additional charge.

Max is working on the meeting schedule, which will be sent to everyone in the Reunion Registration package, but look for a bus trip to the World War II Memorial and possibly another trip to the Holocaust Museum.

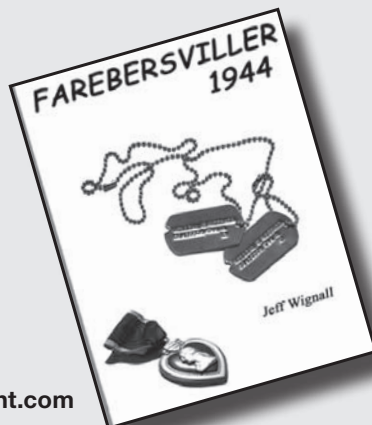
Here’s the details:

80th Division Veterans Association
2010 Reunion
August 11-15, 2010

Sheraton National Hotel
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703-521-1900

Room rate: \$89 per night (plus tax)

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The story of Pfc. William H. Wignall, a machine gunner in Company A of the 318th Regiment, 80th Infantry Division; his life, his world, and the events preceding his death in December 1944 near the French village of Farebersviller in the province of Lorraine as General George Patton’s 3rd US Army attempted to break through the Seigfreid Line into Germany.

Bill Wignall, born in Manchester, England in 1910, emigrated to the US at age 19, working through the Depression years while living in the neighboring cities of Peabody, then Salem, and eventually the Ryal Side section of Beverly, Massachusetts, entered the US Army at the end of 1943. Shortly after reaching the age of 34 he boarded a troop transport bound for the ETO. Assigned as a replacement to the 80th Division in late August, he moved with them across France, rapidly at first until reaching the Moselle River in eastern France where the war became a brutal slugging match for the three months it would take to push across Lorraine to reach the German Westwall defenses at...

Farebersviller

“It’s Never Too Late” CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1.

Dr. Gibbons. “I wanted to know more about my dad, his experiences in the war, what did he go through, and how was he killed?” Her mother died when Dr. Gibbons was only 18, so there was little information available about her father. She knew he had been buried in the Luxembourg American Cemetery and Memorial and had visited the gravesite twice.

Her journey led her to the 80th Division Veterans Association website: www.80thdivision.com, and sent webmaster Andy Adkins an e-mail. Adkins provided her with information about the 30,000+ pages of Morning Reports, Unit Histories, and After Action Reports already online and provided her with specific Morning Reports listing her dad, as well as the circumstances surrounding his death. Adkins also sent Dr. Gibbons a chapter about the Battle of the Bulge from his book, “You Can’t Get Much Closer Than This: Combat with Company, 317th Infantry Regiment, 80th Division,” since her dad was also in the 317th.

In addition, Vic Muller, another member of the 80th DVA, provided her with insights and information regarding documents to obtain the deserved medals for her dad’s actions.

Dr. Gibbons attended the 80th DVA reunion in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. “I felt so welcomed by everyone at the reunion, it almost felt like a homecoming,” stated Dr. Gibbons. “One veteran told me he knew my dad, ‘he was a hell of a guy, a real nice guy. Always had people laughing.’ That little connection meant a lot to me.”

“When I visited Carlisle Barracks during the reunion to do some additional research, Ashley Cordi and Jan Elvin helped me research and find more information about the 80th Division’s actions during the Battle of the Bulge. The pieces of the puzzle started coming together.”

Several members of the 80th Division assisted Dr. Gibbons in her efforts to bring closure to this mission. She said her mother never said much about her father, but her own curiosity, and help from the 80th Division Veterans Association and Sen Nelson helped her discover the medals her father was owed.

“I received enough documentation to fill a four-inch binder,” said Dr. Gibbons. “When I found out that my dad crossed the Atlantic on the Queen Mary and landed at Greenock, Scotland, I was overcome with emotion. I had lived in Greenock in the early 90s and it had always been a special place for me. Knowing that I had been in the same place as my dad, it was even more special.

“I was overwhelmed by the support through this whole journey. At the ceremony, I was very moved when I saw veterans there, especially Virgil Myers and Francis Rajnicek of the 80th. They both spoke of the conditions they and my father endured during that battle. It meant so much to me to have them there.”

Besides those individuals mentioned above, LTC Kelly Niernberger (80th DVA Service Officer and 80th Training Command Public Affairs Officer) helped to arrange the public affairs and press for the presentation. Senator Bill Nelson and his staff made this an extra special occasion by making the presentation in Orlando at the Battle of the Bulge memorial. And, of course, Sgt Jack Frances Sayre, Hq Company, 317th Infantry Regiment for making the ultimate sacrifice to help make this a better world in which to live.

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313th Field Artillery Battalion

by Frances Poletti

Hi everyone. I am a little anxious to get started with my Blue Ridge write-up and I began on it the week I arrived home from the Pittsburgh Reunion. I am so happy I was able to attend and so grateful to those who were able to attend also. Audrey Blocker and her daughter Claudia, Alice Noxon and her daughter Patricia, Hilda Latusek and her daughter Patty, and her husband Jack, and Sue Ambrosic and her husband Jerry, and myself.

We were very disappointed not having any members of our 80th men there. There were only about 150 all told in attendance from the different units. But those of us that did attend, remembered those who no longer are able to reunite with us yearly and of course those members who have passed away.

It was nice being in Pittsburgh, again. I had not been back in some time, and was fortunate to be able to contact my nieces and nephews who live in Moon Township and Coraopolis, PA. I have such good memories of that area. I think some of the happiest days of my life when I was young, were in Coraopolis.

When I returned, I called some of our old friends to check on them and tell them about the reunion. They all seemed very happy to hear from me. Had a long conversation with Paul Burgio and he is doing fine. Gets lonely at times and looks forward to the times that Jim Phillips calls him and they have a nice chat. Also called Ed Hargraves and he said he was happy to hear from me and keeping himself busy. Talked with Jim Phillips and Ruth and they are also doing OK and told them about the reunion and they were also happy to hear from me. Talked with Lou Shirey and was so sorry to hear that his Nephew had passed away and Lou was very upset. Called Paul and Grace Viviano and they are doing OK. Paul spoke to me and sounded great and was happy I called. I will try to get in touch with others next week and hope to find all doing well.

Talked with Warren Burkhurt on Labor Day, he said he was well. And of course I would love to get in touch with everyone, but due to the fact that some of you have changed your numbers etc. I can't. Please keep me updated on your addresses and phone numbers so that I may call and contact you without any problems.

Since it does cost quite a bit to have copies of the address listings updated and mailed out, I am asking for any contribution any of you would like to make towards stamps etc. to send a small donation to Audrey Blocker, who is now taking care of our checking account for us. Every little bit will help, so that we can continue keeping in touch with all of you and keep you updated on all of our friends in the 313th. Also if you have any news at all

you would like me to put into the Blue Ridge, I would be only happy to do so. So please do not hesitate getting in touch with me at any time at all.

Right now I am dealing with trying to get Health Insurance. I hope this has not happened to any of you. The company I worked for for 27 years, Avon, has dropped our health insurance and also death benefit of \$10,000. I am in the throes of trying to find another Health Insurance and it really is upsetting.

Today, Sunday September 27, I received a surprise phone call from someone I had never heard from before, but was very happy to hear from. I am sure some of you remember Joseph Grof, who was also in the 313th. Joseph is from Madison, Ohio, and since he spoke German, he was an interpreter during the war for the 313th Field Artillery Battalion Service Battery. This was very important since there were not too many soldiers that knew that language. Joseph is suffering from emphysema as a result of the work he had been doing at home. If any of you remember Joseph and would like to get in touch with him, I am sure he can call me again, and give me his address in order for me to add it to our listing and make it available to you.

Today, October 5, I received a very nice letter from Dr. Robert C. Sproull. He wrote about his entrance to the 80th Division at Camp Forest, Tennessee 68 years ago. Has it been that long? I guess it has, and how he misses attending the reunions. He and his wife Peg are doing fine so far. He mentioned how he still thinks of Ebensee and the ones who were held there. He also mentioned that one of the survivors from there ended up in El Paso and they had meals together several times. He also mentioned that he has donated copies of pictures taken in Ebensee to the museum.

This should make Audrey Blocker smile—he said that the Blocker's name always brings a smile to him. That Blocker made so many of the nights more tolerable when he'd be coaxed to sing "Paper Doll" just one more time! Magnuson, my partner in crime, couldn't sing worth a hoot, but he'd try when "Paper Doll" came up.

Bob was honored for the research he had done in the 60s and 70s in Houston where there were 150 in attendance from all over the world, Japan, China, Germany, France, England, Greece, U.S.A., Canada Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, and other countries. Bob, we are all very proud of you and your research and happy that you let us know about it. Bob, thank you so much for your letter and I will bring your report with me to the next reunion so others may read it.

I have tried to get in touch with others on our list, but had no luck with some, so please call me, I would love

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

to hear from everyone, how you are doing, etc. I still have not been able to obtain medical insurance as yet, but am working on it. I hope all of you are covered and don't have that worry on your minds.

Please write or call. Love, Fran
28 Arnold Lane, Rowayton, CT 06853
203-855-1928

Florida Post #47

by **Kay Rajnicek, Secretary**

Our October get together in Ocala was a very pleasant and congenial affair. One of the nicest things we experienced was at a Bob Evans Restaurant. While dining, the waitress gave each of us a \$10 gift certificate and informed us that our meals had been paid for. A gentleman and his wife at a table near us had paid our bill. He would not give us his name, but told us that his father had served in WWII and this was his way of saying thanks for what our men did for our country. By the way, there were nine of us at the table. When we left, several women stopped us and expressed their thanks.

Virgil Myers and Francis Rajnicek were invited to attend the awarding of the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart to Dr. Tonyia Gibbons, daughter of Sgt Jack Sayre who was killed in action at Niederfeulen, Luxembourg on Christmas Eve 1944. Tonyia was only 11 months old at the time. Sgt Sayre was with HQ Co, 2d Bn, 317th. He received the Bronze Star for action on Sept 18, 1944 at the Moselle River crossing. The ceremony was held in Orlando, Florida at the WWII Memorial. The Citation and medals were awarded to Dr. Gibbons by Florida Senator Bill Nelson.

Our next meeting will be February 18 - 21, 2010 in Melbourne, Florida at Crowne Plaza Hotel, 2605 North A1A, Indiatlantic, FL 32903; phone is 321-777-4100.

We extend an invitation to those who will be in the area for the winter to come and join us. We always have a great time. For those unable to attend, we wish them good health and a Happy Holiday season.

National Ladies Auxiliary

PNC Brock - PNP Naomi

We hope everyone who came to the 90th Reunion in Pittsburgh enjoyed themselves and liked the boat ride and dinner. And, of course, the Turkey Dinner and Saturday Dinner were extraordinary. The Marriott was very happy with us and hope that we will come back in the near future. We say thank you for not making a fuss over our puppy Bennie, but he has never been left alone. We thank you all for coming to Pittsburgh. Have a good year and see everyone in Arlington, VA next year.

Company L - 319th Regt Report

by **Hank Einolf**

I hope that you had a happy and festive Thanksgiving Day and enjoyed it as much as Maria and I did. We had a leisurely drive to Wyomissing, PA with grandson Jared at the wheel and a leisurely drive home with grandson Aaron at the wheel. In between there were excellent drinks and snacks followed by a delicious dinner with enlivening conversation and apple pie, pumpkin pie and ice cream for dessert. A very special day shared with my son and daughter and their families.

I tried desperately to get some news from my bashful buddies from Company L but got a response only from Betts Flynn and John Balas. Betts said that John is suffering severely from his neck pain and he had to go to bed during the day for relief.

John Balas has been doing a little traveling and was able to visit the Patton Museum at Fort Knox. John has also been working on securing a headstone for his brother who was MIA and then declared KIA and a memorial stone for a cousin who also was KIA in WWII. John is quite proud of his granddaughter who is studying for a Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine and a grandson who is going for a Doctorate and is considering both the Army and Navy as a career path.

I talked to Marshall Hill a while back and he is doing ok. He is now 92 years old and still pretty spry.

I also had an e-mail from Betty Lybergar who said she is doing ok but really misses Earl.

We have had much to be thankful for during this Holiday season. We have our aches and pains but we live and breathe and enjoy each day to the best of our ability. The alternate is not a pleasant thought.

Hope you all have a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

New York Post 43

by **Burt R. Marsh**

The only news I have to report is on a sorrowful side. Harry F. Nutting passed away on September 5, 2009—we have lost another staunch member of Post 48. He was always a happy-go-lucky person at our meetings and so easy to get acquainted with. As a BAR man serving with Co. I 317th Regiment, 80th Division, he conversed with me on many, hair-raising occurrences in his life during WWII. He will be remembered by all that had an association with him, specifically, we will remember his passion "The Bird Houses." Our sincere condolences for his family, wife Frances, and sons Kenneth (Susan) and David (Barbara). We will all miss Harry.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13

POST NEWS CONTINUED

I have had conversations with Angelo Barone two to three times a month. He is doing well, his doctor tells him to slow down, but those of you who know Abe, know better. Abe, you better listen to your doctor as well as to Kay.

Talked to the Norrrys last month—Vera and Gerry are both having back problems, therefore, many visits to the doctor. They are hoping their return to Florida and warmer, sunny climate will perk them up; let's hope so. The McCormics are doing okay, Jane and Mac are doing a lot of fraternizing within the family; Jane says it keeps them busy.

Also had a short conversation with Bob McDonald. He and Helen are hanging in there, looking forward to our Geneva meeting.

Our Geneva meeting is at the Lake Front Ramada at the foot of Seneca Lake on May 17 thru May 20, 2010. We will have our wine trip Tuesday and hopefully a trip on Wednesday. Our luncheon will be Thursday at noon. Don't forget a gift for our white elephant program. All members of the 80th are invited.

A belated Happy Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas to all. May the New Year 2010 be prosperous and healthier to all.

Until next time, Burt

Annual Membership Dues are Due January 31, 2010

As you may know, membership dues for the 80th Division Veterans Association are paid in January of each year, unless you are a "Life" member, which is a one-time payment. We've made it easy to tell when you've made payment: simply look on the address label of the Blue Ridge Service Magazine. Next to your name there should be a "PAID xxxx". The "xxxx" is the year you are paid up to. In the example below, Andy Adkins is paid through December 2009, meaning he needs to pay membership dues by January 31, 2010 for the coming year.

Also, please check your address. If there is an error, notify the National Secretary, Andrew Z. Adkins III. His contact information is on the second page of the magazine. If you've moved or are moving, please use the "Moving?" label included in the magazine. This will help us keep up to date on members as well as save postage due fees.

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Contributions The last date I have entered a name is Dec. 1, 2009.

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Beckman, Charles F. (C-318)
Bowman, Mrs. Betty (80th QM, Family)
Burns Jr., James A. (A-314th FA Bn, Family)
Caldwell, Thomas C. (319-Med Det)
Casulli, Dominic (A-319)
Hotz, Roger D. (F-317, Family)
Kohnen, James L. (E-317, Family)
Kutsch, Daniel F. (319, Family)
Mosley, William (2d Bn Hq-318)
Porter, LTC Grant R. (80th Training Command)
Richards, Donald P. (F-317)
Wadley, R B (I-319)
Wignall, Jeffrey (A-318, Family)
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Mrs. Vera Teerlinck

Other contributions

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Mr. Robert Wilkinson -
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Berry, Otis, 80th Hq, G4
DOD: 10/19/2009
Rptd by Doris Wollett

Blanchard, Eugene M., E-318
DOD: 9/11/2009
Rptd by his son-in-law

Booth, F. Dale, D-317
11 Lou Ellen Drive
Little Rock, AR 72202
DOD: 9/3/2008
Rptd by his son, Robert

Gulden, Julius L., 3d Bn Hq-317
211 Batesville Dr, Apt 52
Greenville, SC 29607
DOD: 8/31/2009
Rptd by his wife, Virginia

Hawkins, Rev. Kenneth T., L-317
201 West Covell Street
Garrett, IN 46738
DOD: 10/16/2009
Rptd by his son, Ken D. Hawkins

Inselmini, Bruno, Cn-318
142 Church St.
Bradenville, PA 15620
DOD: 10/25/2009
Rptd by Helen Beers

Merrill, Maj. Sam D., A-319
4388 CR 4505
Commerce, TX 75428-6602
DOD: 9/10/2009
Rptd by his wife, Barbara

Nutting, Harry F., I-317
2056 Coolidge Place
Niskamuna, NY 12309
DOD: 9/5/2009
Rptd by Tina Barton

Patenaude, Reginald C.,
C-314 FA Bn
245 Oak Avenue, #405
Sebring, FL 33870
DOD: 2/14/2009

Richardson, Jack J., E-317
101 Trowbridge Rd.
Neoga, IL 62447
DOD: 5/28/2006
Rptd by Ross Richardson

Schneider Jr., Antone, M-317
RR2 Box 35
Burwell, NE 68823
DOD: 11/8/2009
Rptd by his son, Duane

Stevens, Lyell,
80th Div Hq - AG Sec
12721 Whisper Way
Fishers, IN 46037
DOD: 5/3/2009
Rptd by his wife, Anita

Stuart, Carl A., 3d Bn Hq-318
2485 SW Hideaway Lane
Stuart, FL 34994
DOD: 4/4/2009
Rptd by Bertha Stuart

Swiader, Joseph G.,
1st Bn Hq-317
1604 Highland Avenue
New Hyde Park, NY 11040-3944
DOD: Nov 2007
Rptd by his son-in-law

Trauterman, Robert P., A-319
3804 Oak Meadow Dr.
Round Rock, TX 78681
DOD: 5/24/2009
Rptd by his son, Rob

Vonada, John F., F-318
100 Tuck Court #312
Lebanon, PA 17075
DOD: 08/2009
Rptd by Cecelia Smith

Weaver, Robert L.,
80th Rcn Troop
2803 Tamarind Dr.
Edgewater, FL 32141
DOD: 2007
Rptd by his son, Eldon

The Story of Taps

by Andrew Z. Adkins III

Of all the military bugle calls, none is so easily recognized or more apt to render emotion than the call of Taps. The melody is eloquent and haunting and its history is interesting with snippets of controversy. It is thought to be a revision of a French Bugle Signal called Tattoo, a call to notify the soldiers to cease the evening's drinking and return to their garrisons. It was sounded an hour before the final call of the day to extinguish all fires and lights.

The music for Taps was adapted by Union General Daniel Butterfield for his brigade (Third Brigade, First Division, Fifth Army Corps, Army of the Potomac) in July 1862. As the story goes, General Butterfield was not pleased with the Extinguish Lights call—it was too formal to signal the day's end. With the help of the brigade bugler, Oliver Willcox Norton, General Butterworth modified the call while camped near Harrison Landing, VA. He ordered the new version to be played at the end of the day and it was heard far beyond the limits of his brigade. The next day, other buglers visited Norton, asking for copies of the music.

How did it become associated with funerals? The earliest official reference to the mandatory use of Taps at military funeral ceremonies is found in the U.S. Army Infantry Drill Regulations for 1891, although it has doubtlessly been used unofficially long before that time, under its formal designation, Extinguish Lights.

The first use of Taps at a funeral was during the Peninsular Campaign in Virginia. Captain John C. Tidball of Battery A, 2nd Artillery ordered it played for the burial of a cannoner who had been killed in action. Since the enemy was close, Capt Tidball worried that the traditional three volleys of cannon fire would reveal his battery's location and renew fighting.

It occurred to Captain Tidball that the sounding of Taps would be a good substitute. The custom thus was taken up throughout the Army of the Potomac, and finally confirmed by orders. The music was made the official Army bugle call after the Civil War, but not given the name Taps until 1874. Taps is now played by the military at burial and memorial services, to accompany the lowering of the national colors and for "lights out" at the end of the day.



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80TH DIVISION MONUMENTS: Sacrifice Field, Fort Benning, Georgia (left) and Heritage Trail at the Army Heritage and Education Center, Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

Care to share your story?

Send it to:

Andrew Z. Adkins III
Secretary/Editor
80th Division Veterans Association
2121 N.W. 54th Terrace
Gainesville, FL 32605-3392

Visit the 80th Division Veterans Association Site on the Internet: www.80thdivision.com

- History of the 80th Division, including WWI & WWII
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