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508th Parachute Infantry Regiment Association

WINTER 2001

Newsletter

Issue 86

IN DEFENSE of OUR COUNTRY



INSIDE: **Page 2** - List of Officers & Reps.
(PLEASE KEEP LIST FOR YOUR FILES)
Page 3 – *Letter from* **President Bob Speers.**
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Page 5 – *PHOTO GALLERY - Tampa*
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Holiday Greetings

The Officers wish all of OUR COMRADES and FRIENDS of the 508 Parachute Infantry Regiment Association and their families Good Health and Good Cheer during this Joyous Season. May we all continue to be blessed in the company of our loved ones throughout the New Year 2002, and may Peace Reign in Our Hearts and throughout Our Land.

A Donation Hooks You Up

Paratrooper _____ Wife _____

Check one: Member ☐ Associate Member ☐

Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Company _____ Rank : _____ _____

ASN _____ Dates Served _____

For Association: $ _____ Other: $ _____

Make checks or money orders payable to 508th PIR:
Mail to: Ernie Lamson, 1135 Edgcumbe Road,
St. Paul, MN 55105-2831

A Big THANK YOU to All who sent in Donations since September, 2001. Your response has been generous. You have given our 508 PIR Association a much welcome boost!
HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO ALL!

508th P.I.R. Association of Officers

OFFICE	NAME	COMPANY	PHONE	ALT. REP	PHONE
Chairman	O.B. Hill	Hq 1st	(760) 325-5118		
President	Bob Spears	Hq 2nd	(918)-245-2539		
Vice President	David J. Nagle	E Co	(707)-823-1455		
Past President	Norb Studelska	D Co	(414)-377-4107		
Treasurer	Ernie Lamson	A Co	(651)-699-7366		
Secretary	Francis Lamoureux	G Co	(413)-583-2493		
Parliamentarian	Rock Merritt	Hq 1st	(910)-425-5818		
Trustee	Tony Yablonski	I Co	(410)-665-5867		
Trustee	Paul Hamblin	C Co	(770)-451-5015		
Storekeeper	Ernie Lamson	A Co	(651)-699-7366		
Company Rep	Bob White	A Co	(304)-727-3641	William F. Bauman	(618)-392-4710
Company Rep	Frank Novak	B Co	(440)-843-7923	R. Archambault	(406)-222-9711
Company Rep	Bill Traband	C Co	(610)-532-4609	John Coates	(410)-531-2475
Company Rep	Frank Haddy	D Co	(515)-357-4362	Walter Baker	(618)-452-3762
Company Rep	Fred Infanger	E Co	(631)-667-8081	Bob O'Connor	(503)-649-2394
Company Rep	Ted Lee	F Co	(307)-265-2277	Tom Toper	(907)-243-3227
Company Rep	Lane Lewis	G Co	(615)-890-3638		
Company Rep	Harry Roll	H Co	(513)-922-0249	Warren Wilt	(316)-286-5469
Company Rep	Chad Conway	I Co	(704)-735-1461		
Company Rep	George Stoeckert	Hq 1st	(703)-451-4629	Rock Merritt	(910)-425-5818
Company Rep	Chet Graham	Hq 2nd	(925)-937-6839	Louis M. Manion	(502)-447-8250
Company Rep	Lawrence Jeffers	Hq 3rd	(614)-667-6558	Jack Schlegel	(914)-688-5772
Company Rep	Harry Kennedy	HqHq	(650-349-1998	Bob Abraham	(405)-789-2264
Company Rep	Heimer Swanson	Ser Co	(507)-825-3762	Dave Kuony	(402)-553-5324

Please save this list for future reference. Notify the Secretary of any changes.
An updated list will be printed in the SUMMER Issue 88 of the Newsletter in June 2002.

From the President:

O.B. Hill assures us that plans are well in hand for the 2002 reunion in **Laughlin, Nevada.** The weather will be on the warm side, but most of our activities will be held in air-conditioned comfort. Those of you traveling by air, I suggest that you check out air fares now while the price is right. I recently made a trip from West Palm Beach, Florida to Sacramento, California (round trip) for $204.

The year 2004 is still the probable date for retirement of the Association – contingent upon the approval of the General Membership in Laughlin.

The initial phases of the "War against terrorists" has progressed rapidly. As I write, the Taliban has been toppled and Osama bin Laden is on the run. The fear of biological attack has given way to the suspicion that the enemy is possibly one of our own. We also face the threat of the use of nuclear weapons in the Middle East.

I agree with the President of the United States, ***let us carry on with our lives as usual***, but we must stay alert for whatever evil attacks the enemies of our way of life may have in mind.

I have been watching the TV series, **"Band of Brothers".** Our own O.B. Hill had a part in the introductory to the series. I must add that **I am extremely proud to have served with the Red Devils of the 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment. The troopers of the 508 throughout their illustrious record,** *first in War and then in Peace have become a "Band of Brothers" in their own right.*

Bob Speers

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D-Day Anniversary Tour to Normandy is in the works for 2002. If you are interested, call Battlefield Tours at 504-646-0354,

Or write to Battlefield Tours, P.O. Box 1054, Slidell, LA 70459-1954.

Eddie Polk will gladly answer all your questions.

From the Chairman O.B. Hill:

As we enter our 28th year as an Association, I wish all of you ***the Happiest of all Holiday Seasons.***

May Christmas this year be special to each of you. I feel certain that your dinner will be warmer than the one we had Christmas Day of 1944.

This coming year promises to be another banner one for our 508 Association.

We have a great reunion planned for August in Laughlin, Nevada, and I urge all of you to sign up for one or more of the activities planned for 2002.

Together with the officers of the 508 PIR Association, ***I send you all Best Wishes throughout the Holidays and in the coming Year***

Soft Landings always!

O.B. Hill

From our Treasurer Ernie Lamson:

Registrations for 28th Annual Reunion:

First to register: Harold Canyon (Hq 2nd); Second was Harry Hudec (Hq Hq) followed by John Hodge (G) and Mary Hodge; Pat Casanova (E) and Rita Casanova; Jack Dube ((H) and Martha; Carl Porter (D) and Marly; Walter Baker (D) and Irene.

Charlene joins me in wishing you all Happy Holidays and a Happy & Healthful New Year.

Ernie

****

LOOKING AHEAD: In 2003 the 508 PIR Association 29th Annual Reunion will be held in Fort Mitchell, Kentucky. The site is the Drawbridge Inn and Convention Center. The dates are Thursday, August 21 through Sunday, August 24, 2003.
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The SCOOP on Retirement:
The Retirement Advisory Committee Chair **Norb Studelska & "Rock" Merritt** Vice Chairman say, ***"THANK YOU"*** to the TASK leaders who gave of their Time and Talent during the past year.

Genesis of Retirement plans:

The Hamblin Committee worked four years (1994-1998) to lay the foundation for the on-going Association retirement program.
Originally known as the "Future of the Association Committee" with Past President, Paul Hamblin as Chairman and with help from Bob Abraham, George Stoeckert, and Ed Ott (who died on February 19, 1999) , it has evolved into today's **RAC committee.**

Action at Tampa, Florida:

The general membership voted to validate the retirement date of the Association to be on or about October 20, 2004 at our final reunion at Camp Blanding, Florida.

SEE Issue 82, page 4 for report of completion of TASK 2 by **Dr. John Hardie** and his committee; dedication of the **Sergeant Leonard Funk** Memorial at Camp Blanding and **DZ DIABLO** dedicated through efforts of **Bob Abraham.**

TASK 4 involves development of Company Albums to be archived in the Camp Blanding Museum Library.
Under the leadership of **Walt Silver** three companies have completed their albums:
"H" Co., facilitated by **Harry Roll** and **Don Jakeway.**
"G" Co. by **Robert Kolterman** and **Service Co.** by **Heimer Swanson**.
Vice President David Nagle is working with company reps to complete **Task 4.**
NOTE: The names and telephone numbers of company representatives are listed on page 2 of this NEWSLETTER.
Give them a call if you have anything to contribute to this worth-while project..

ALL Members of the Board of Directors are involved in carrying out Tasks which must be completed by 2004.
VOLUNTEERS serving on the **RAC** are Bob Abraham, Hank LeFebvre, and Chet Graham. ***You are invited to VOLUNTEER!***

QUESTIONS on the Retirement of the 508 should be directed to:
Norb Studelska
1021 12th Avenue
Grafton, WI 53024-1964
or, to Rock Merritt
1517 Atwick Dr.
Fayetteville, NC 28304-3901

If RETIREMENT is NOT in your future, consider this:

Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion is holding their 14th annual Mini-Reunion in the heart of New Orleans, Louisiana on March 24 through March 27, 2002.

ALL are WELCOME !

The site is the newly renovated Le Pavilion Hotel. (Rooms are $85 per night.) The format is the same as our 508 reunions. Welcoming breakfast on Monday, March 25, 2002; banquet on Tuesday and farewell breakfast Wednesday. TO REGISTER send Fee of $65 per person to:
Chairpersons for the event are:
Ray and Edna Kennedy
1128 Sinbad Street
Baker, LA 70112
Tel. (225)- 775-7104.
YOU MUST make your own Hotel Reservations by calling 1-800-535-9095 between 9:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M. Central Time. To get reduced rate ($85) tell them you are with the 508 group. A shuttle bus from Hotel to airport is available. ($10 per person.)
A major attraction is the new D-Day Museum.
Cutoff date for reservations is February 24, 2002.
Celebrate *Springtime* in New Orleans!



Tony Rogers the Jolly "Brit" searching for Boston Harbor in Tampa with the assist of O.B. Hill and Margaret and Harry Hudec keeping them in tow.



Tony Rogers and Dick Owen (H Co). Anglo-American relationship at a new HIGH. Tony presented Lipton Tea bags to the Yanks to replace the tea dumped in Boston Harbor. (Nice gesture, TONY!)



Visitors from France at our Tampa Reunion: Jean-Loup DELATTRE (far right) and Don Dicks (I Co) in middle & Mme DELLATTRE. Jean-Loup is Secretary of Cercle Historique "U.S. Airborne" in France.

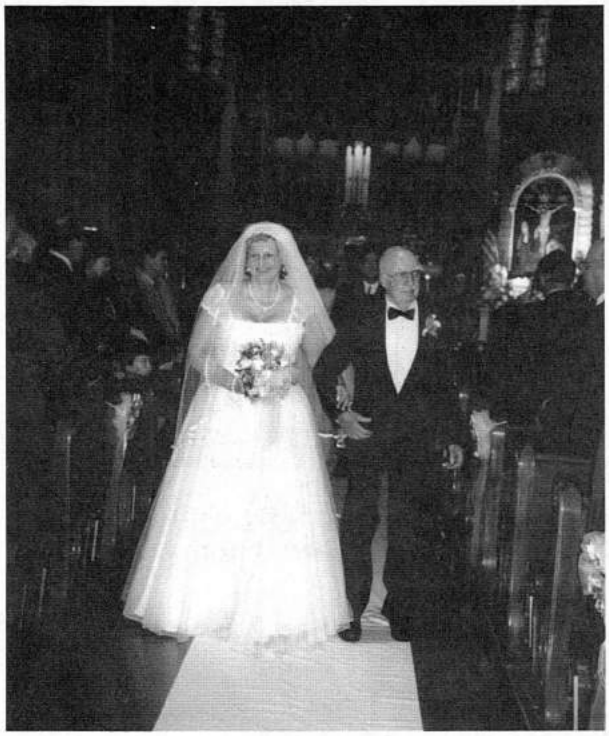


Joe Kissane (G Co) and his wife, Emily. Joe was recipient of the O.B. Hill Award from G Company for 2001. in Tampa. Over the years Joe has drawn many historical maps depicting the battlefield positions of "G" company in Holland and in the fighting in the Bulge.

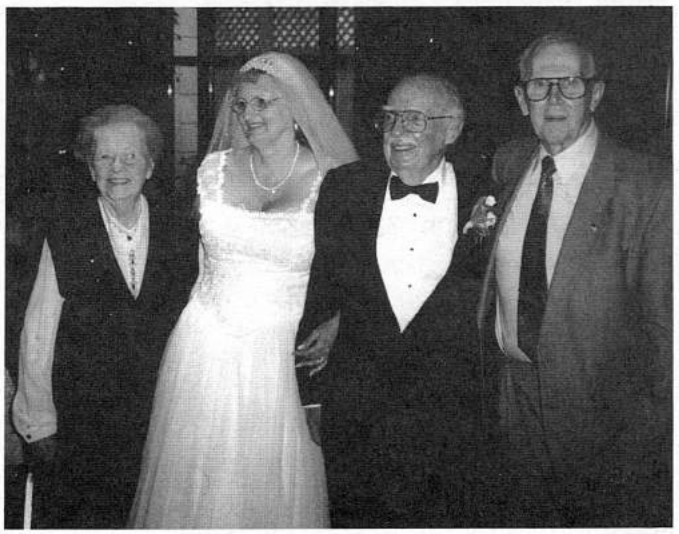


Tom Porcella (H Co) and his wife, Molly. Porcella and Chet Graham (Hq 2nd) were hosts to Lucien Hasley and his wife at the Tampa Reunion. Lucien who lives in Le Port Filiolet near Hill 30 is the sculptor who created the Memorial Wall to the 508 PIR on his home in France. Lucien and Henri-Jean Renaud also assisted in the publication of the French edition of Tom Porcella's account of the fighting record of H Company in Normandy. The title of his book is "JUMP INTO DARKNESS". (Published 1986)
In the French edition of Tom's book titled: *"Saut dans L' Obscurité" he states:"*: This book is written in tribute to all those who died to gain freedom, many of whom lie forever on the soil of France." He has donated some of the proceeds of his book to help sick children in France and their families.

Wedding Bells for Charlene and Evan Confrey (G Co) – October 20, 2001



Charlene Caisse was given in marriage by her mother and father at her favorite church in Hartford, Connecticut. Evan's four sons served as best man and ushers.
A lively reception was held at Chez Josef in Agawam, Massachusetts



Among the many friends and relatives who shared this happy day with Mr.& Mrs. Evan Confrey were Hildegarde and Francis Lamoureux (G Co).

Congratulations to Evan & Charlene!

QUOTES: from our mailbag -

From Dave Thomas (HqHq):
" Lou Mendez was a great officer. He should have had a star. … The 508 is close to my heart. I'll always remember with pride my service to those outstanding troops. There has never been a better soldier than the WWII airborne trooper."
ED's NOTE: Dave is a retired Brigadier General.):

From Roland J. Rogers (I Co):
"I wrote to Colonel Lou and Jeannie Mendez, (just before his passing..) sending along a news article about a friend of theirs in St.Paul and to thank Lou for his telephone call to me when I was recovering from my last neck-spine surgery. I hope my words of appreciation comforted Jeannie in her loss ."

From Dorothy Lutton (Hq 1st):
"My husband, Jim Lutton died May 18, 2001. I will not be attending any of the reunions. I was sorry to hear of Colonel Mendez's passing. Jim thought very highly of him."

From Mrs. Shirley Jarvis, 6522 N. Robb Rd. Fowlerville, MI 48836:
"My father, Mr Edgar L. Blaney (Hq 1st) subscribes to the 508 PIR Assoc Newsletter. Knowing how much he enjoys keeping in touch with this very special association I decided to make a contribution to the Newsletter in his name.
It makes me sad that people are just now becoming interested in the heroes of WWII when I've always known the sacrifice my father and all veterans have given to this country. We need to treasure everyone who served in the Armed Forces."

From Joan O'Day daughter of **Irv Shanley (Hq 2nd):** "Enclosed is my donation to the 508th PIR Association. I am deeply honored to be associated with such a fine group of soldiers. We have always been very proud of our Dad. We appreciate the the sacrifices made by the 508 Regiment to ensure America's Freedom. All of you have given my generation and those to follow a reason to be proud that we are Americans. God Bless America!"

From Briand Beaudin (Hq 3rd) : "Enclosed, donation to **Hook Me Up.** I did not want to cut the insert – because I want to preserve the story on Colonel Mendez. I have a few mementos to give to the Camp Blanding Museum. I'll call Francis Lamoureux for precise directions to mail same."

Taps

Donald L. King, (B Co) died May 11, 2001. He is survived by his wife, Pauline who resides at 43 4th St. NW #2, Oelwein, IA 50662

Charlie Murray (B Co) died August 11, 2001. He is survived by a daughter: Brenda Infinger, 1447 West Main St., Harleyville, SC 29448.

Arnold C. Foster (Hq 1st) was killed in an automobile accident November 6, 2001. His wife Alice was hospitalized. Arnold was interred with full military honors in Seymour, Indiana.. He leaves his wife, Alice, a daughter and son, six grandchildren and four great grandchildren. Send condolences to: Mrs. Arnold Foster, 8229 N. County Rd, 1110 E Seymour, IN 47274-9801.

Raymond J. Hummel (Hq 1st) died November 14, 2001 of Alzheimer's. He was interred with full military honors in Moundsville, WV. He is survived by his wife Alice, a daughter and two grandchildren. Mrs. Raymond J. Hummel, 7 Kermit Ct., Moundsville, WV 26841-2470

John L. Guaschino (A Co) died November 28, 2001. He was a retired Provost Marshall in the Army at Fort Dix, NJ. He was an Army veteran of WWII and the Vietnam War. He leaves his wife, Edna; two sons; two sisters; five grandchildren and a great-grandchild. Burial was in the Florida National Veterans Cemetery on December 6, 2001. Mrs. Edna Guaschino, 332 Upland Ave., Spring Hill, FL 34606.

Simon L. Renner (Ser Co) Died August 2001. He was from Arkdale, WI. He has no survivors. Company rep Heimer Swanson recommends his name be deleted from roster.

Jim Lutton (Hq !st, A Co) died May 18, 2001. He was VP of the 508 PIR Association from1997-1998. His ashes were scattered on Mt. Washington near his home in Pittsburgh. Mrs. Dorothy Lutton, 700 Gallion Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15226-1681.

Arthur Victor Fish (F C0) died April 23, 2001. Letter from his wife, Jeanne relates that they were married 53 years. They had ten children and 28 grandchildren. He was a POW in Stalag 4 B. He wrote a book of his experiences which he never published. His wife Jeanne thanks the 508 for all they have done. Arthur was proud of his comrades in the 508 and enjoyed keeping in touch. Mrs. Jeanne Fish, 10262 Roscoe Blvd., Sun Valley, CA 91352-3637.

John S. Hurst (F Co) died April 10, 2001. He was murdered by his neighbor who had gone berserk and later shot himself. Newsletter was returned with no forwarding address. From **Jim Allardyce (B Co) & Ted Lee (F Co).**

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Boyd J. Patterson (F Co) died January 8, 2001. A letter was received from his wife, Bernice Patterson on 7/30/2001. Her new address is: 804 S. Prairie Ave., Sikeston, MO 63801.

Frank J. Pesce (Hq 1st) died January 16, 2001. His wife, **Elsie** called **Warren Brown (Hq 1st).** Send condolences to: Mrs. Elsie Pesce, 12 Fitzgerald Rd., Somerset, MA 02726.

Robert F. Harper (C Co) died December 16, 2000. A letter received from his wife, Esble I. Harper says he was buried in Biloxi National Cemetery. Her new address is: 500 Jade Ave., Metairie, LA 70003-6621.

Frances Williams (Hq 1st) wife of Robert J. Williams (Hq 1st) died June 18, 2000. She is survived by her husband and three children and 3 grandchildren. Robert J. Williams, 326 Falling Tree Rd., Fayetteville, NC 28306.

Bill Burr (Company unknown) died July 31, 2000. He was listed on the roster at: 705 Greenwood, Dalton, GA 30720. A phone call was received from his wife to remove his name from the mailing list.

EDITOR"S NOTE: Most death notices originate through the company reps. That explains why it is helpful when they keep contact with men in their company. Often calls from spouse of the deceased do not reach me until many months after the funeral.

508th P.I.R. Association
28th Annual Reunion
Sunday, August 4 through Wednesday, August 7, 2002
Laughlin, Nevada

NAME: Mr----------Wife: ----------Company----

ADDRESS:----------Telephone:----------

CITY: ----------STATE ……..ZIP ……..

I WILL HAVE ……. GUESTS. NAMES FOR THEIR ID'S ARE LISTED BELOW:

1. 2. 3. 4.

The fee per person is $65.00.

ENCLOSED IS: $_____ registration FEE for _____ PEOPLE.

Send THIS WHOLE PAGE in with your check and HOTEL RESERVATION

HOTEL RESERVATIONS

Registration (Sunday)		**8/04**	**☐ King-size Bed ☐ Double bed**
Company Rep Meeting (Sun.)	**4P.M.**	**8/04**	**☐ Non-Smoking Room**
Memorial Breakfast (Monday)	**9A.M.**	**8/05**	
Pictures (Monday)	**11A.M**	**8/05**	
Business Meeting (Tuesday)	**9A.M.**	**8/06**	**Arrival date will be _____**
Banquet (Tuesday)	**7P.M.**	**8/06**	**Time_____A.M._____P.M.**
Farewell Breakfast (Wednesday)	**9A.M.**	**8/07**	**Checkout DATE _____**

Please make all checks or money orders payable to: 508th P.I.R. Association.

Send this pre-registration form with hotel reservation information and check or money order to:

Ernie Lamson, 1135 Edgcumbe Rd., St. Paul, MN 55105 Ph (651) 699-7366

**** No money is required at this time for Hotel Reservations. **A down payment of $19.00 reserves your room, but, it is needed only if you will arrive after 6:00 P.M.**

When you receive confirmation from the Hotel, your credit card number insures your room.

If you have questions you may contact the Hotel at **Ramada Express, Inc.**

2121 South Casino Dr., Laughlin, NV 89028; Tel: 702-298-4200

Please Note: To set up a room for a Company CP, contact Ernie Lamson to obtain group rate.

PLEASE CHECK OFF HOW YOU CAN HELP AT THE REUNION

☐ Registration Desk ☐ Regimental CP ☐ Table Decorations

I need a wheel chair: ☐ YES I need a refrigerator for insulin: ☐ YES

Pre-registration STOPS 3 weeks before the REUNION. Late reservations made at the HOTEL

ALL Changes must be made through ERNIE to avoid FALSE BILLING! And MIX-UPS!