Francis M. Lamoureux, Sec'y
102 Miller Street
Ludlow, MA 01056-3315
Phone (413) 583 2493

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508th Parachute Infantry Regiment Association

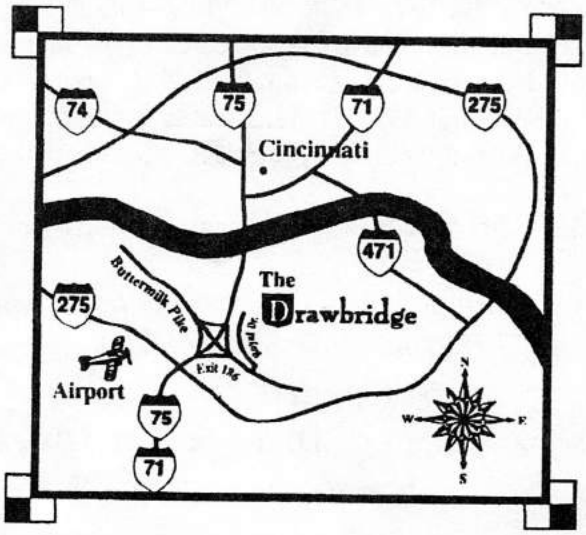
Fall 2002 **Newsletter** Issue 89

The Drawbridge Villager Premier Hotel
Site of 2003 REUNION : Fort Mitchell, Kentucky

2477 Royal Drive, Fort Mitchell, KY 41017-3599
Phone # (859) 341-2800

***COMPLIMENTARY Airport shuttle.**
***FREE parking**
***24 HOUR Restaurant Service**
***In-room coffee maker**
***In room irons/ boards**
***In room hair dryers**
***Indoor heated swim-pool**
***Two outdoor pools**
***Hotel easily accessible from area highways including I-74 & I-275**
*** 5 miles south of Downtown Cincinnati.**

Road Guide for drivers to Reunion



A Donation Hooks You Up

Paratrooper _____ Wife _____

Check one: Member ☐ Associate Member ☐

Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Company _____ Dates Served _____

Campaigns: _____

For Association: $ _____ Other: $ _____

Signature _____

** Send this Form to our Treasurer, Ernie Lamson **

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

NOTICE: The 508 Association does not require dues to retain membership, ***however,*** if you wish to continue receiving the Newsletter you are advised to notify the Secretary or the Treasurer of your recent address. (If you are unable to make a donation send the HOOK-UP form to the Secretary.)

508th P.I.R. Association Officers

OFFICE	NAME	COMPANY	PHONE	ALT. REP	PHONE
President	Ken "Rock" Merritt	Hq 1st	(910)-425-5818		
Vice President	Norb Studelska	D Co	(262)-377-4107		
Treasurer	Ernie Lamson	A Co	(651)-699-7366		
Secretary	Francis Lamoureux	G Co	(413)-583-2493		
Past President	Bob Speers	Hq 2nd	(561)-575-3011		
Trustee	Tony Yablonski	I Co	(410)-665-5867		
Trustee	Paul Hamblin	C Co	(770)-451-5015		
Storekeeper	Ernie Lamson	A Co	(651)-699-7366		

NOTE: An up-to-date list of Company Reps will appear in Issue 90 of Newsletter.

Our Treasurer, Ernie Lamson just received some PATRON-BENEFACTOR donations.
These are Gifts to the Association dedicated to one or more of our deceased members.

From **Zig Boroughs (HqHq)** dedicated to the memory of **Colonel Louis G. Mendez, Jr. (Hq 3rd/ HqHq)**
From **Zig Boroughs (HqHq)** dedicated to the memory of **O.B. Hill (Hq 1st)**
From **Zig Boroughs (HqHq)** dedicated to the memory of **Donald Hardwick (HqHq)**
From **Zig Boroughs (HqHq)** dedicated to the memory of **Alice Abraham (AM, HqHq – wife of Colonel Bob Abraham (HqHq)**

From **William McClure (D)** dedicated to the memory of **John T. Agee (D Co)**

The Association thanks the Patrons listed above for their donations.
We join the Patrons in sending our condolences to the families of our deceased members.

See page 8 for Registration Form for our 29th Reunion
Drawbridge Inn, Fort Mitchell, Kentucky
Thursday, August 21 through Sunday, August 24, 2003

Message from Ken (Rock) Merritt:

I want to thank all of the members of the 508 for placing their trust in me, as President and Norb Studelska as Vice President by electing us to office for the coming year.
On Tuesday, August 6, 2002 in Laughlin the General membership voted to retire our beloved Association at Camp Blanding, and Gainesville, Florida. This will take place during our 30th Annual Reunion which is scheduled for October 17 through October 20, 2004.
I promise you, as President, that Norb and I together with members of the Board and with your help will do our best to set up a retirement program for the year 2004 that ensures that our 508 Association will be retired with honor and dignity.
One of the TASKS with which the Board will be concerned is the preparation of a FINAL ROSTER which will be archived at the Museum in Camp Blanding. This involves the cooperation of all current members and assistance from Company Representatives. The Secretary will submit the final roster with address changes, revisions and deletions to the Board for approval at our 29th reunion in 2003.
Details will be provided in the next issue of the Newsletter.
Nation-wide, veterans are dying in record numbers. Members of the 508 are no exception. We ask you to notify the Secretary or your company rep as soon as you learn of a death or illness among our ranks.

Communications must be maintained between company reps and members of their own company, as well as Association Secretary, Francis Lamoureux. who will forward death notices and news items to newly-appointed editor of the 508 Static Line column, Bill Nation.

Take care of yourselves and of one another.
Sally and I wish you a Happy Holiday Season!
See you in Fort Mitchcell, Kentucky..

Airborne,

Rock

Seasons Greetings

From Officers and Directors Of the 508 PIR Association

Our future is up to you!

Your officers are working hard to bring closure to the work of our 508 Association at our final reunion in 2004.
The year 2004 will also be a milestone for the 60th Anniversary of D-Day in Europe.
Some of our members will be in Normandy to observe this historic event. The people of Normandy, Holland, Belgium and England never tire of honoring the men of the 508 for our courageous acts which helped regain their country's freedom from the tyranny of Naziism.
From reading our 508 newsletters, you can see that there is a core of interest among the sons and daughters, brothers and sisters and grandchildren of our comrades who are eager to learn "the rest of the story" about what we did in WWII.
The relatives of many of our comrades who were killed in combat have wanted desperately to know how their loved one died. They have waited many years to find someone who could tell them. It has been a great comfort to them to finally learn from the men who knew them and who were at their side at the moment of death what really happened.
The information age has done much to bring our 508 family together.
The time is ripe for the 508 PIR to have its own web-site.
Through a remarkable set of circumstances your Editor has been contacted via the internet by a highly qualified web-designer who has set up as a trial, a full-blown web site which can continue to provide a myriad of information about the 508 Parachute Infantry Regiment since its activation on October 20, 1942 up to and beyond its retirement in October 2004.
What is even more remarkable is that he is related to Captain Gerard Ruddy (Hq 1st) who was KIA in Normandy. His name is Richard J .O'Donnell of Melbourne, Florida. He served in Vietnam and he has a proud military record.
You can access his website at:
http://www.angelfire.com/fl5/508thpir/index.htm
Let me know what you think. More details to follow.

Francis M. Lamoureux, Secretary / Editor

From our Mail Bag

From Elizabeth Farrell,

185-01 Hillside Ave., Apt 5F
Jamaica New York 11432

"My uncle **Martin Teahan** was in the 508th in Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion. He was KIA on June 6, 1944 in Picauville.
In 1990, I was put in touch with O.B. Hill. He sent me a wonderful letter. He had been very good friends with my uncle, Martin. What a treat and an Honor it was for me to speak to someone from the 508th who knew my uncle so long ago!"
"In June of 2000, I met O.B. in Normandy for the first time. Meeting O.B. and other 508'ers and visiting my uncle's grave will remain as one of the highlights of my life."
"I learned of the intense bond of friendship that was forged among the men of the 508. Getting a message from O.B. was always good fun. I simply adored him like everyone else did. I'm glad I have this opportunity to thank all of you for what you did so long ago.
Please rest assured it will never be forgotten and neither will O.B."
Thanks for your kindness, *Liz Farrell*

****

Letter from George Stoeckert, (Hq 1st):

"I met **Russell Mayer**, a veteran of the 508 on November 2, 2002 at a meeting of the Washington, D.C. Chapter of the 82nd Abn. He had never heard of the 508 PIR Association.
Russell was a medic in Hq 2nd. He jumped into Holland with the 508 and fought in the Bulge.
On November 9, he assisted me laying wreaths in Arlington National cemetery at **the 508 Monument and the grave of 1st Sergeant Leonard Funk.**
We were accompanied by Duke Armandariz, President 82nd Abn. Div. Association.
A large receptive audience was on hand to hear the 82nd Bugler play Taps , backed up by the 82nd Color Guard.
Sgt. Funk was memorialized as the most decorated paratrooper of WWII who served under the 82nd
"Our Red Devil wreaths and impressive Ceremony reflected great credit on the 508 PIR Association."
George Stoeckert

O..B. Hill Awards

Margaret Hill and her son, Joe Hill presented the certificates to 508'ers who were selected for the honor in recognition of their contributions to their respective companies and to the 508 Association.
(DUE to limitations of space, photos and list of award winners is deferred to next Newsletter)

Letter from Larry Roberts (AM, brother of Gladwin L. Roberts, "G" Co.)

"Our entire family appreciated your helping me and my daughter, Carla, to attend the 508 reunion in Laughlin. Meeting someone who had been in such proximity to Gladwin on the day he died is something we have all longed for. We send you sincere thanks and our warmest regards."
"The last evening we were there in the "G" company CP was especially enlightening to me.
Being with all of you was like being with family members. How brave and well trained you all were."
"We purchased the book, History of the 508 Parachute Regiment. My nine year old grandson is especially interested in this history."
"Francis, since we are a religious family, we very much appreciate your prayers for Gladwin and all the information your initiative has helped us gather for our family history."
"Kindest personal regards, Larry Roberts"
488 Greencraig Road
Los Angeles, CA 90049

Editor's Note: I was with Gladwin L. Roberts the day he was killed in Normandy on his twentieth birthday. His brother Larry Roberts was 12 years old at the time. Larry's daughter. Carla contacted me via the internet. I persuaded them to attend the 508 reunion in Laughlin. I propose that Larry Roberts be accepted as an Associate Member of the 508

Northern Ireland remembers the 508 !!!

DO you remember your days in Portstewart?
The people in this picturesque corner of County Antrim want to hear from you.
Mr. John McCann writes: "Our parents and grandparents have told my generation that "The Yanks" were here, but when we asked them to tell us more they say 'I never asked' I want to leave a written record of the 508 as a source for future generations in Northern Ireland."
HELP ME to tell the story of your stay here and your role in the liberation of Europe.

Mr. John McCann, 5 Mountainview Gardens, Co. Derry
Northern Ireland, BT45 7QW

Reunion Highlights – Laughlin

Election of Officers; The slate of 0fficers presented by the Nominating Committee chaired by Darrell Glass was elected without opposition.

President:	**Rock Merritt**
Vice President	**Norb Studelska**
Treasurer	**Ernie Lamson**
Secretary	**Francis Lamoureux**

Out-going President **Bob Speers** continues as a voting member and advisor to the Board in the capacity of **Past President.**

Business Meeting:

The Reunion site for 2003 was approved for Fort Mitchell, Kentucky. See Registration Form on page 8 for details.

****

The members voted to confirm the Retirement Date for the **FINAL REUNION** at Camp Blanding, Florida to be on or about **October 20, 2004.**

****

Ernie Lamson thanks all the 508'ers who worked at the ***Registration Desk in Laughlin: and in the Regimental CP.***

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From George Stoeckert (HQ !st):
The Washington Post dated June 6, 2002 tells how **Prétot,** a village of 500 dedicated **Place Colonel Mendez** as a tribute to Colonel Louis G. Mendez who commanded the 3rd Battallion of the 508 Parachute Infantry Regiment in the battle which liberated the little village on June 20, 1944. Colonel Mendez earned the Distinguished Service Cross, the nation's second highest military honor for his leadership in this action.

Jeannie Mendez , accompanied by eight of their twelve children, seven of the spouses and nine grandchildren were honored by the people of Prétot, both young and old, some of whom still had memories of that day on which they were liberated.

Among veterans of the 508 present at the ceremony was Tom Porcella (H Co) who had participated in the liberation of Prétot..

Dominique Francois a Historian who lives in Picauville, close to Prétot, has just published a book which recounts the history of the 508. Before he died, Colonel Mendez wrote the preface to the book.

Dominique, for many years a friend to men of the 508 who return to Normandy to observe D-Day conceived the idea of commemorating Colonel Mendez..He explained, "The people of Normandy are different from the Parisians. In Normandy the Americans are venerated."

****

Reunion Memorial for O.B. Hill

##########

A memorial service was held August 6, 2002 at 3:00 P.M. in the theater of the Ramada Express Hotel, Laughlin, Nevada to honor the memory of O.B. Hill, our Founder and National Chairman from 1975 to 2002.

Participating in the Celebration of the Life of O.B. Hill were past presidents of the 508 PIR Association:

Chet Graham, Hank LeFebvre, Paul Hamblin, and Ken (Rock) Merritt.

The Eulogy was delivered by Norb Studelska .

Don Lassen, editor of the Static Line, paid a special tribute to his friend O.B.

President Bob Speers gave the Welcoming remarks.

In the closing flag ceremony , our 508 color guard marched in holding the flag at the four corners. A live bugler played taps The flag was then folded and handed to Bob Speers, who then presented the American flag to Margaret Hill on behalf of the 508 Parachute Infantry Regiment Association.

A video presentation depicting O.B. Hill taking part in D-Day observances in Normandy in 1995 was shown on two wide screens in the theater..

The Board of DIRECTORS extends THANKS to all who participated.

Special "Thanks" go to the Management of the Hotel – and to Odie Callin., Director of the Veterans Museum at the Ramada Express Hotel.

We have received THANKS from Margaret Hill and the Hill family for the expressions of sympathy and for the memorial services honoring O.B. that were conducted at our Reunion.

JUST IN, from Joe D. Hill: "We extend to members of the 508 and your families, our warmest wishes for a safe, pleasant and Happy Thanksgiving. We have many things to be thankful for . . . nothing greater than family and good friends."

Sincerely, Joe D. Hill

Our 508 Paratroopers in the NEWS

Harry Roll named Paratrooper of the Year by 82nd Airborne Chapter.

Ben Beekmaan, National President of 82nd Abn Association presented Harry with a plaque bearing the sculptured likeness of General Ridgeway at the Annual dinner in Dayton, Ohio.

Nate Silverlieb, B Co was honored as Veteran of the Year in Holyoke, MA .

At veterans Day services he was presented with Citations from Governor Jane Swift, the Mayor of Holyoke and from members of the legislature.

Zig Boroughs was guest speaker at the Pickens Middle School "Salute to Veterans" on November 11, 2002.

The school is cited as South Carolina's "First Palmetto's Finest School 2001-2002."
Zig relates how the students interviewed local veterans, took pictures and put together a book entitled "***An Honorable Heritage***", which was printed by a local press. Student leaders presented copies of the book to the veterans.
A historian in his own right, Zig provided this highlight.:

"I received a book produced by a History Class at Madera High School, Madera. California.
It was sent to me by **Angelina Fuller, sister of Louis Spera, I Company, 508** who was killed at Fulbeck Airfield, England while loading bundles equipped with land mines for our aborted jump into Belgium in August 1944.
Angie met with WWII veterans who had a history club. She invited them to meet with High School students in her home. The students were inspired to publish the veterans' stories as a class project. "
When Zig showed the book to Mr. Dean Holder, Principal of Pickens Middle School, he, in turn, showed it to teachers and students who rose to the challenge.
Starting in September, 2002 the students dug in and had the printed version of "An Honorable Heritage" ready for the Veterans Day Program.
Zig says, "Lots of credit goes to Angelina (Spera) Fuller."

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Editor's Note: Zig, you, too, deserve a share of the credit !

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COMPANY REP'S: Take Notice !

IN MEMORIUM

Walter (Walt) Silver, (C Co) died at home October 29, 2002. Walt retired from Exxon after 50 years of service as an engineer .He jumped into Normandy on D-Day 1944 with the 508 Parachute Infantry Regiment He jumped into Nijmegen, Holland on September 17, 1944 with the 508 in Operation Market Garden He also took part in the Battle of the Bulge. He retired from military service as a full Colonel He was Vice-President of the 508 PIRA from 1999-2001. Send condolences to his wife, Jan at:
1167 Longwood Dr., Baton Rouge, LA 70806-7047I

David E. Thomas, Regimental Surgeon, Died October 23, 2002 in San Antonio, TX

A retired Brigadier general, he was buried with full military honors at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery.
Dave joined the Medical Corps in 1939. He was the first Army medical officer to get his jump wings. He jumped into Normandy on D-Day, June 6,1944 with the 508 Parachute Infantry Regiment. On D+4 he was captured by German troops and put to work in a front line hospital treating both German and American wounded. On D+7 he escaped and found his way back to American troops. He is credited with saving many lives through the exercise of his surgical skills. He was with the 508 in Holland and in the Battle of the Bulge.
During the Korean War, Dr. Thomas was chief of surgery at three hospitals in Japan He served as commander of the U.S. Army Medical Command in Vietnam. He was attending physician to President Johnson and President Eisenhower.
Dave Thomas was President of the 508 PIRA in 1977 .
In recent correspondence, he wrote: "I've had a good life I've seen the world courtesy of Uncle Sam. I've spent five years overseas taking part in three wars. I've had a lot of fun, plenty of adventure, made friends with a lot of great people, saved lives, and led an active life. I will join my dear wife, Jeanne, with a smile on my face, knowing I made a significant contribution to our great nation."
Send condolences to his son .

Normand E. "Gus" Thomas
30 Devonshire Square
Mecahnicsburg, PA 17050-6878

Editor's Note: *"*"Gus" Thomas had a fine model in his dad. Gus served in the 82nd Abn. Div, 173rd Airborne Brigade and in the 101st. A Senior Jumper, he retired as 1SG.
"Gus" you are now an Associate Member of the 508 PIR Association. You are listed on our roster and will continue to receive our Newsletter.
~~~~~~

Taps

Day is done, gone the sun from the lake,
from the hills, from the sky.
All is well, safely rest. God is nigh.

Durell Head (Hq 1st) died June 27, 2002 in Winter Haven, Florida.
He is survived by his wife, **Arnice,** children and grandchildren
Send condolences to: Mrs. Durell Head,
110 Orange Ave. SW, Winter Haven, FL 33880.
(Rec'd by Ken Merritt July 9, 2002 and forwarded to George Stoeckert, Hq 1st)

Robert W. Malcolm, (A Co.), died May 26, 2002. He was buried with military honors. His wife, Rosemary, stated that he is interred beside their son, Sgt. John D. Malcolm who served with the 82nd Airborne. John was K.I.A. in Vietnam. Send condolences to:
Mrs. Robert Malcolm, 359 Baileyville Rd.
Middlefield, CT 06455-1014

Angelo A. Ripellino, (Hq 2nd), died July 11, 2002. of complications from diabetes.
Send condolences to his wife, Josephine at:
4501 Ducrest Ct., Columbus, OH 43220-3617
(From Chet Graham.)

Leland Christian, (F Co.) died October 13, 2001. (Call from his wife, Laura)
Send condolences to : 1402 W. Berridge Ln
Phoenix, AZ 85013

Fred Infanger, (E Co.) died July 16, 2002
He jumped into Normandy with the 2nd Battalion Pathfinder Team. He was Company rep for "E" company. He was retired from 82nd Abn. Special Forces. Besides his wife, Dorothy, he leaves 3 daughters and two sons. Fred was buried with military honors. (Phone call from David Nagle.)
Send condolences to his wife, Dorothy at:
41 Jessen Ave., Deer Park, NY 11729-5420

Adrian "Ken" Kolkman, Sr. (D Co.)
Died August 8, 2002. Send condolences to his son, Brian Kolkman, 1254 First St., Simi Valley, CA 93065. (From Walter & Irene Baker)
William H (Herman) Stowe, (H Co) died September 17, 2002. He leaves his wife, Laura and a son, David. Send condolences to Mrs. Laura Stowe, 764 Elm Road, Madison Heights, VA 24572-6002. (From Harry Roll)

Ray Costanzo, (I Co,) Died Monday, August 19, 2002.
He jumped into Normandy with the 508 on D-Day. He was taken prisoner June 18, 1944 and treated for his wounds in a German hospital. He was liberated by advancing American troops and sent to England before returning to the United States for treatment.
Ray was awarded the Bronze Star with "V" for valor, the Purple Heart and the Combat Infantry Badge.
He was appointed Superintendent of Arlington National Cemetery and remained there until he retired in 1990.
On November 10, 1988 **President Reagan** presented him the newly created **Prisoner of War Medal**.
Ray Costanzo will always be remembered by his friends and comrades of the 508 for arranging a prized location in view of the Tomb of The Unknowns for the erection of a monument to the 508 surrounded by a grove of three Colorado blue spruce.
Colonel Louis G. Mendez, Jr. gave the dedication address in Arlington on October 1982 on the occasion of the 40th Anniversary of the Activation of the 508.
Ray is survived by two sons, Joe of Atlanta and Bill, of Purcellville; a brother, two sisters , eight grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. **Send condolences to his son: William Costanzo, 17325 Pickwick Dr., Purcellville, VA 22132**
(Reported by Fred Gladstone, (I Co) and Jeannie Mendez; obit clipping –George Stoeckert, Hq 1st.)

Joseph Tancrel (G Co.) died September 20, 2002 in Sunrise, Florida in the company of his family.. Joe was best man in the wedding of Francis Lamoureux and Hildegarde Fitzgerald in Wilbraham, Massachusetts, November 12, 1945. Joe Tancrel attended his first 508 reunion in Tampa, Florida
Send Condolences to his brother: Larry Tancrel, 9 Stearns Ave,. Hookset, NH 03106

Bob Rooney, (B Co.) died November 16, 2002. (Phone call from Nate Silverlieb.)
Condolences to Bob's son: Mike Rooney, 2030 East 6th Ave., Port Angeles, WA 98362

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Marcus Heim (505, Friend of 508)
Marcus died suddenly at home from a heart attack on October 22, 2002. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his valiant stand at La Fiere Causeway Marcus and his wife Gloria captured our hearts when we met them in Normandy in 1995 ,1997and 1999.. They attended our reunions. **Send condolences to: Gloria Heim, P.O. Box 298, Middlleburgh, NY 12122-0298**

PLEASE send this entire page with Registration FEE

508th P.I.R. Association
29th Annual Reunion
Thursday, August 21 through Sunday, August 24, 2003
Fort Mitchell, Kentucky

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 with your check.

HOTEL RESERVATIONS

Registration (Thursday)		**8/21**	☐ **King-size Bed** ☐ **Double beds**
Company Rep Meeting (Thurs.)	**4 P.M.**	**8/21**	☐ **Non-Smoking Room**
Memorial Breakfast (Friday)	**9 A.M.**	**8/22**	
Pictures (Friday)	**11 A.M**	**8/22**	
Business Meeting (Saturday)	**9 A.M.**	**8/23**	**Arrival date will be _____**
Banquet (Saturday)	**7 P.M.**	**8/23**	**Time_____A.M._____P.M.**
Farewell Breakfast (Sunday)	**9 A.M.**	**8/24**	**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 $79.00 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: **Drawbridge Inn, 2477 Royal Drive, Fort Mitchell, KY 41517. Telephone: (859)-341-2800**
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**
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!