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

Return Service Requested

Presorted
First Class Mail
US Postage
PAID
Palmer, MA
Permit #22

1942 1945

508th Parachute Infantry Regiment Association

Newsletter

Spring 2003 Issue 91

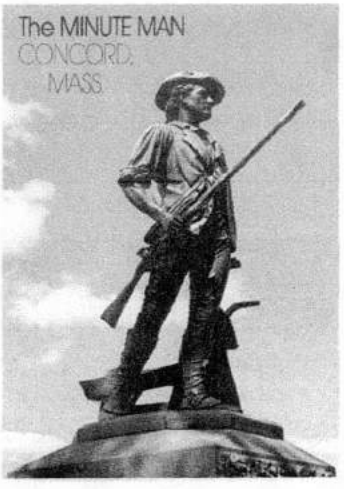
Target Date for next Issue
Summer 2003: June 15, 2003

The Minuteman at Concord April 19, 1775

Erected in 1875 for the centennial celebration of "the shot heard around the world" fired by the Minutemen at the rude bridge in Concord, Massachusetts, the statue designed by sculptor, Daniel Chester French, depicts the farmer-soldier leaving his Spring plowing to answer the call of arms. These musket shots signaled the Birth of a New Nation.

Today, nearly 228 years later, latter-day counterparts of the Minutemen have left home and family to give birth to a New Global Order. Tens of thousands of our young people serve as highly qualified volunteers in their chosen units of the United States Armed Forces. They have been trained and equipped with modern weapons of warfare utilizing satellite technology and superior guidance systems.

In one respect they are at one with the Minute men - They are endowed with raw courage to defend our shores, to protect our freedoms and to ensure Peace for All of Human-kind.



We of the 508 – Veterans of what we hoped would be the Final Conflict in World War II – unite in Spirit with today's Minutemen and Pray for their safe return to our beloved Country.

A Donation Hooks You Up

Paratrooper _____ Wife _____

Check one: Member ☐ Associate Member ☐

Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Company _____ Rank _____

ASN Dates Served

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

Register NOW for our 29th Annual Reunion at Fort Mitchell, KY August 21 to Sunday August 24, 2003 SEE page 8 for details.

508th P.I.R. Association Officers

OFFICE	NAME	COMPANY	PHONE	ALT. REP	PHONE
President	Ken "Rcck" Merritt	Hq 1st	(910)-425-5818		
Vice President	Norb Studelska	D Co	(262)-377-4107		
Past President	Bob Speers	Hq 2nd	(561)-575-3011		
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	Nate Silverlieb	B Co	(413)-538-8828	Frank Novak	(440)-843-7923
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	Bob O'Connor	E Co	(503)-649-2394	George A. Shenkle	(610)-489-4266
Company Rep	Ted Lee	F Co	(307)-265-2277	Tom Toper	(907)-243-3227
Company Rep	Lane Lewis	G Co	(615)-890-3638	*Francis Lamoureux	(413)-583-2493
Company Rep	Harry Roll	H Co	(513)-922-0249	Warren Wilt	(316)-286-5469
Company Rep	Roland Rogers	I Co	(602)-569-8573	Joeph P. Schwan	(480)-945-5381
Company Rep	George Stoeckert	Hq 1st	(703)-451-4629	*Ken (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	(740)-667-6558	Jack Schlegel	(845)-688-7114
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

*Acting Alternates

(If your phone number is incorrect, please send the corrected number to the secretary.)

President's Report :

I am pleased to give our members this Progress-Update on the Retirement of our beloved 508 Parachute Infantry Regimemt Association scheduled for October 19, 2004.

On March 17, 2003, I met with officials of the Camp Blanding Museum in Augusta, Georgia to develop and co-ordinate a scenario for the retirement of the 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment Association.

Conferees:
Camp Blanding ---- Major Greg Parsons, Curator of the Camp Blanding Museum.
Major Mauzey, Operations
508th Association Rock Merritt, President
Paul Hamblin,
George Stoeckert

Major Mauzey was called away at the last moment due to the Iraq situation.
Fortunately, I had in attendance two members of the Hamblin committee that has worked for the past 7 years on our retirement.

At the beginning of the meeting Major Parsons stated that he was instructed not to say, "NO" to any of our needs.
We were assured that they would do their best to honor our requests.

The meeting lasted two hours. The following objectives were obtained.

1. **We defined and co-ordinated a scenario.**
2. **Responsibility for activities was established.**
3. **The time schedule for the retirement ceremony was agreed upon.**
4. **Mutual preferences and requirements were identified.**

Before we meet for our 29th Annual Reunion in Fort Mitchell, Kentucky I will sign a "MEMORANDUM of AGREEMENT" with the officials at Camp Blanding.

Our Retirement Plans are on track. We will retire with dignity and honor, Thanks to the untiring efforts of the Hamblin Committee.

I assure you that I will continue to work with our Vice President, Norb Studelska, the Board of Directors and the Hamblin Committee.
The most important ingredient of our Final Reunion will be YOU, our members.
We invite you to attend. Start now to make your plans. We will make a special effort to honor all attendees including the original cadre who were with the 508 when it was activated at Camp Blanding in 1942.

In closing, I am reminded that Spring is the season of Hope and Renewal of Life. Memorial Day will be fast upon us. Over the years we have steadfastly honored our fallen comrades of the 508 on this Day of Remembrance. We do not fail them, and we must not fail all of the young men and women who, on this very day on which I write, are engaged in combat in Iraq. We pray for a swift victory to this war. We pray for a safe return of all of our servicemen to their wives and children.

We do not forget !

Ken "Rock" Merritt, President

****

Time is running out –only two reunions left!
Register EARLY for Fort Mitchell, Kentucky. If you CANCEL for any reason YOU ARE GUARANTEED A FULL REFUND!!!
<u>Please send the entire page 8 when you register</u>. It's for my records.
Thank You,

Ernie Lamson

Colonel Thomas J.B. Shanley is to be honored June 20, 2003 by the people and the Mayor of Picauville in Normandy. The road encircling Hill 30 will be named after Colonel Shanley.

A delegation of 20 or more friends and family members will accompany Lucille, wife of Colonel Shanley, to the dedication ceremony. Also in attendance will be Chet Graham and other 508 troopers from Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion who were with the "Shanley- group" that fought off the advance of a German Battalion on Hill 30 for three days following the 508's airborne landing on DZ "N" on D-Day, June 6, 1944.

Colonel Shanley (West Point, 1939) was commander of the 2nd Battallion, 508 Parachute Infantry Regiment whose D-Day mission was to seize a bridge over the Douve River at Pont l'Abbé. Only two companies of the Red Devils assembled under Colonel Shanley – due to the scattered drop. One mile short of the bridge, the 200 men who had assembled with Shanley met strong German resistance. Gathering their wounded, Colonel Shanley set up defensive positions on Hill 30. For the next two days the Shanley group beat off strong German units which tried to overrun the main airborne drop zones. Isolated from supplies of food, dwindling amunition and medical necessities for care of the wounded, the men fought valiantly and successfully resisted the German advance.for three days.

In Gerard M. Devlin's book "PARATROOPER", he states, "Many historians have credited Shanley's defiant stand on Hill 30 as being one of the major reasons for the overall success of the American airborne effort in Normandy."

Irvington T. Shanley (Hq 2nd) writes:
"I received word from Dominique Francois that the June 20, 2003 date is firm. Colonel Shanley does not travel much anymore – he will not make the trip to Normandy." Travel arrangements can be made through Eddie Polk of Battlefield Tours:
P.O. Box 1054, Slidell, LA 70459-1954 or by calling Eddie at (985)- 643-4764"

Report from 15th Annual Reunion of Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion received from George Stoeckert:
Held in Augusta, Georgia – March 16 through March 19, 2003 – the reunion was graciously hosted by Laura Palmer with help from Donna and Troy Palmer. About 50 attended three days of activities including the Memorial Breakfast on Monday, a visit to Fort Gordon on Tuesday and the Reunion Banquet on Wednesday. A highlight of the Banquet was the presentation of a plaque designed by Van Walker honoring Kenneth "Rock" Merritt. The wording on the plaque reflects the love and respect of the men of Hq 1st for "Rock".

A Tribute to an Honorable Man

We the Surviving WWII Veterans
And members of Headquarters Co., 1st Battalion
508th Parachute Infantry Association,
Here Assembled, March 19, 2003 in Augusta, GA
Do Hereby Salute

Kenneth "Rock" Merritt

Retired Command Sergeant Major
We Honor Him for His Many Years of Outstanding Service to Our Country
We Thank Him for his Dedication and His Continued Support of Our Organization.

Well Done "ROCK"

Tentatively, Hq 1st will meet in either Gulf Port, Mississippi or San Antonio, Texas for their 16th Annual reunion.
Van and Allean Walker will sponsor the reunion. George Stoeckert will provide the details once plans are finalized.
Once again, Headquarters 1st leads the way. About 50 troopers with friends and families attended this year's reunion in Augusta.
What further proof is needed that ***mini-reunions are the way to go.?***

****