508th Parachute Infantry Regiment Association

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NEWS LETTER

JANUARY 1979

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ISSUE 9



THE ALAMO

NEWS FROM SAN ANTONIO

General Dave has been beating the Texas bushes for the 508th. He's got the reunion all tied up for September 14, 15, and 16th at the St. Anthony Hotel. The hotel has 200 rooms for our arrival on Sept. 14th and departure on Sept.16th. The special rates will be $32.00 a night for single,double or twin. This special rate will also be in affect for our reunion participants early arrivals and later departures.

Dave didn't have all of his committments in hand when I talked to him, but these are the plans he's putting into shape.

An early bird party for the first 250 arrivals at the Jersey Lily Saloon on Thursday night. This is on the grounds on the Pearl Brewery and is done in a frontier motif.

The Golden Knights from the 82nd will jump. They will be in town for a five day recruiting campaign. Anybody for reenlistment?

We may participate in the Mexican Indepandance Day parade on Sunday the 16th. San Antonio has a large Mexican- American population with deep cultural and family ties. This will be a big thing. The whole week we are there will be full of celebrations culminating in the parade.

There's consideration being given to a bus tour of the Missions.

The welcoming breakfast and memorial Luncheon will be at the St. Anthony.

A tour to Guadalajara, Mexico either before or after the convention is still on the fire.

We will have more information and reservation applications in the next News Letter.

THANKS FOR THE CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

The officers of the Association were overwhelmed with Christmas greetings and best wishes for the New Year. It just wasn't possible to answer each of you. You're a great gang! We thank all of you for your thoughtfulness and hope that you had a blessed Christmas and wish you the best of everything for the New Year.

REUNION DISCUSSIONS

Before selecting San Antonio for 1979, we had a good wide open debate on where and when to meet. There were presentations for Los Angeles and Portland and mention was made of New Orleans, Chicago, Atlanta, Orlando and Columbus, Ga. There were some things that became evident that are worth remembering when picking a site. Holiday weekends give rock bottom prices and that puts it within our means. A site in a population centre attracts a lot of members, but one in a new area brings in guys we've never seen. (I added almost a page of new names to our roster after Denver). We should plan our site 2 years in advance, to give the reunion chairman adequate time.

Finally, anyone with an idea for a reunion site should realize that if he mentions a place it is understood he is in charge that year. For those suggesting sites in the future, you should come prepared for a presentation. If you want to invite someone from a hotel staff to make the presentation, that's OK too. Do remember to let O.B. or Hank Le Febvre know you want room on the agenda a month or so ahead of the reunion.

With all of those good thoughts, we will probably have a tough choice next year.

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NOTTINGHAM

Jack Bailey, 3rd Bn, runs the White Horse Pub in Nottingham.

Here's something to think about from Ralph Burris, F Co. His friends over there say there are enough people in Nottingham with the right spirit to put a gang of us up in their homes on our next visit. It's something to think about. We might reciprocate for a reverse visit.

WOLLATON PARK

Ralph Burris, F Co, is a regular visitor to Nottingham. He followed through on his own idea some months ago, and arranged for the planting of a tree in the Park in the name of the 508th. The town council liked the idea so much that they arranged for a plaque to be placed by the tree. It was all dedicated by our 508th tour group in June.

The plaque reads:

FURY FROM THE SKY
DEDICATED JUNE 14TH, 1973 TO
OUR FRIENDS IN NOTTINGHAM.
WOLLATON PARK WAS OUR HOME IN
THE MONTHS PRIOR TO OUR D-DAY
JUMP INTO NORMANDY AND OUR JUMP
IN HOLLAND SEPTEMBER 17TH, 1944.
MAY OUR FRIENDSHIP BE EVERLASTING.
AMERICAN 508TH PARACHUTE INFANTRY
REGIMENT ASSOCIATION.

Thanks Ralph for the superb idea and your generosity.

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COMMITTEES FORMED

The Association is really functioning when we can get the participation we did in Denver for the overall effort.

There's a committee to get full Regimental colors to be used at our reunions. It consists of Rock Merritt, Hq 1st, Marv Risnes, G Co, and Jim Smith, B Co.

One to provide suitable pins for the outgoing officers. Okey Mills, Hq 3rd heads this, assisted by Alton Bell, D & Hq 3rd, and Jim Murphy, H Co.

Another to design Regimental jackets. Ralph Burrus, F Co is organizing this and will select volunteers.

And finally one to re-equip the Petite Parachutists of Normandy. Hank Le Febvre A & Hq 2nd and Rock Merritt compose this committee.

CHEF DU POINT

O.B. gave a short report on the reception-s and dedication of the park. The people over there open their homes and hearts to the airborne. Our gang was overwhelmed with hospitality. Every reception had lots of food, drink and good cheer.

The dedication was a splendid affair. The people are very grateful for our efforts.

Madame Thomas and her son, Francois, were at our reunion. She did the French co-ordinating for the project. She received many personal words of thanks from our members and a parachute plaque, with words of appreciation from our Association.

O.B. reminded us that the project over ran the estimates and more contributions are required to pay it off. He has a detailed write-up of the 1978 tour that he is distributing. A motion was passed to sell these and use the profits to help pay off the project. The cost is $3.50. Write to; O.B.Hill, 917 McCarthy Ct. El Segundo, CA. 90245.

Donations to the memorial park should be sent to our Treasurer-Jim Smith, 1403 Valencia Dr. Fayetteville, N.C. 28303

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NEW OFFICERS

There was good participation in selecting 1979 officers. Some new blood with new ideas were selected. The line up has the following:

Chairman - O.B.Hill
President - Hank Le Febvre
Vice President - Rock Merritt
Treasurer - Jim Smith
Secretary - Jim Allardyce

An overwhelming vote of thanks was given Dave Thomas, Med Det, and Jack Schlegel, Hq 3rd, our outgoing President and Vice President. They did yeoman service for the Association. They were among the first to suggest that some change would be good for us. Rest on your well deserved laurels Dave and Jack.

We enjoyed the hospitality of Dave and Dona Zack in their room Labor Day. Things had quieted down with most everyone gone, so they made their room the C Company CP. Bill Traband, Jim Hardie, 504th and Anne and I had a nice wind down drink in the afternoon. I don't know when they got to bed that night. The place was really jumping when we looked in later.

Woody Plunket, G Co, came for the first time. He was overwhelmed by the welcome he got from his gang.

Bill Tumlin, C Co, did a real fine job as our volunteer chaplain for invocations.

Ray Hummel, Hq 1st, was a big help wherever he was needed. He helped with the candle ceremony at the Memorial Luncheon.

Art Akei, C Co & Hq 1st, reminded Loyle McReynolds, D Co, of a mutual experience they both had with a half track near Rheims.

Bill O'Keefe, Hq 1st, brought small red roses, donated by Andy Sklivis for all the ladies at the dinner dance.

Ed Wenzel, E Co, had some very good pictures he had taken in Normandy. The one showing the exact spot where he knocked out two tanks is a super souvenir

Earl Hickman, F Co, was there in his WW II dress uniform. It's a perfect fit and he looked great.

Don and Mary Krause, E Co, shipped out with 6 cases of Coors on the plane. Pacifiers for the kids they said.

Bob Chisolm, I Co, was everywhere with his big smile. Being from El Paso, he ought to be ripe to help General Dave in San Antonio in '79.

Fernando Anaya, G Co, is sporting a beard. He's even more distinguished looking, but I didn't recognize him at first.

REUNION ENCOUNTERS (cont'd)

Herman Jennigen, A Co, is coming out of a very short retirement. He got an offer he coulin't refuse.

John Boone, Hq 1st, H & I Co's, was there to sup ort the bid for a reunion in Portland, Ore. He's as enthusiastic as a Texan about his state.

Wally Steffen B Co, is a good swimming buddy. He's a railroad man from Maynard, Iowa.

Louie and Kay Apicello, C Co, came all the way from Florida. The lass has lost her accent--- until she's excited.

Angel Romero, G Co, and his whole family came up from El Paso. You have a nice looking gang Angel, and they had a good time.

Jim and Helen Convy and daughter Sharon, Hq3rd, took in all the action. Sharon had the start of a beautiful tan early in the game.

Did Jim Hardie, 504th, catch his plane in Chicago? He left a blue streak behind him. Jim was in the river crossing at Nijmegen.

Jim Hutto, I Co, came through from South Carolina in 2 cars with 5 members of his family- in-laws included. It's swell to share our fun and memories with others.

Ralph Busson, H Co,and his daughter Jane came from Ohio. Ralph still has the pig roasts. Good luck at school Jane.

Tom Dellaca, Serv Co and 509th was our good buddy. We all owe a lot to Tom for helping our Association get started. He was there with good advice and hard work from the start.

It has to be said, Mickey Nichols, E Co, was there with Marion, his bride of ___ years. It was her first reunion. She told everyone that she'll never miss another!

FIND YOUR BUDDIES

Within the last month, Ralph Burris, our Pikes Peak buddy, sent in 9 F Co new names. Harry Hudec big splash and 2 strokes in the pool, sent in 8 Hq- Hq Co new addresses. If everyone did that we would have 8.5X 600 = 5,100 names and adiresses.

Let's get to it guys!

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THANKS TOM AND LEW

We all had a terrific time in Denver. This was due to the good job of our reunion chairman, Tom Heun and his able assistants Lew and Pat Burrows. Everyone knows of the time and effort that went into getting our accommodations lined up, the menus planned, and the group tours arranged. It all worked out well. All 283 of us were very pleased.

Thanks Tom, you're a real trooper. Thank Lew and Pat, you're a perfect pair.

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DENVER ATTENDANCE

Full attendance = 269
Partial attendance = 14
TOTAL = 283

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FROM THE OLD PHILOSOPHER

Our hospitality rooms vary in size with what the hotel has or can provide by law. When discussing this, Joe Metar, G Co, gave the best speech of the week by saying, "We fought as a Regiment, let's drink as a Regiment".

What more can be said for our spirit!

Jim Allardyce