508th Parachute Infantry Regiment Association



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NEWS LETTER

JANUARY 1981 ISSUE 16

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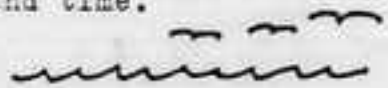
1981 REUNION DAYTONA BEACH

Mike Wargo's Florida "gators" have things going for us. The Dates are June 26,27 and 28th,1981 in Daytona Beach, Florida. The place is the Plaza Hotel right on the beach. That's a change of hotel from the October News Letter but it's better. Mike was joined by O.B. and Bob Chisolm for finalizing things and the Plaza came through with a good deal for us. They are newly renovated, have a beautiful beach, big pool, and a Regimental C.P. with a big bar!

The deal is $30.00 a night-single or double occupancy and $40.00 for suites. The special rate is for 2 weeks before the reunion and 2 weeks after. We pay the hotel when we check out. They take all major credit cards.

The registration fee this year is unchanged at $45.00 a person. The 508th must be the only group to have held their prices for several years despite inflation. If you want to register early, there's a form in this letter. Send it to Jim Smith our treasurer and be assured of a place for "fun in the sun in '81."

Bring your families to the reunion. Many people do. We are very friendly and informal. The Guys swap war stories and renew old friendships. The families join in this too or take a break in the recreational facilities or a little shopping tour. In Daytona Beach, we are right on top of Disney World, Sea World, Marineland, Silver Springs and Cape Kennedy. We all should have a grand time.



THANKS AND BEST WISHES FOR THE NEW YEAR

You overwhelmed us with your Christmas greetings. You are the greatest, and we thank all of you for your thoughts. It's just not possible to write everyone, so please accept our best wishes this way. All of the officers hope that you had a Blessed Christmas and wish for you the best of everything in the New Year.

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WARGO RECRUITS WANTED

Mike Wargo, Hq 1st, our 1981 reunion chairman is still looking for helpers. His old buddies and Florida neighbors can help make this reunion a success by offering to take a small piece of the action. Contact Mike at 322 Douglas St, Edgewater, Fla. 32032. His phone # is 1-904-345-3233. Many hands make light work.

A REGIMENT OF THE EIGHTY-SECOND AIRBORNE DIVISION «ALL-AMERICANS»

508th 1981 MEMORIAL TOUR TO EUROPE

Here's another opportunity to visit the scenes of our European experiences. This one features the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany with an extension to England. We'll dedicate a memorial to the 508th in Beek, visit Nijmegen, Wyler and other battle sites. Travel to Belgium and find places there of importance to us: LaGlieze, Werbomont, Vielsam, Stavelot, etc. Along the way we'll visit WWII cemeteries where some of our buddies lie. Liege and Frankfurt are also included.

There is plenty of time allowed for visiting on this trip. Most meals are included.

The optional extension to England adds 6 days to the tour and visits to Nottingham, London, Stratford-on Avon, etc.

To sign up or for information write Galaxy Tours .(OVER)

Galaxy Tours - 508 PIR
P. O. Box 45
King of Prussia, PA 19406
Telephone: 215-265-2778

RESERVATION APPLICATION

Sounds Great! Please make ____ reservations for our 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment Tour. Enclosed is $____ representing $200 per person deposit for the ☐ Main Tour; ☐ Main Tour plus Extension to England.

My name _____

Names of persons traveling with me and their relationship: _____

_____

Address _____

City, State and Zip Code _____

Telephone: Area Code _____ – Home _____ Office _____

I desire: [ ] single room at additional cost; [ ] 2 in a room, roommate if other than spouse _____

Please make checks payable to 'Galaxy Tours - 508PIR.' Signature _____

INDY - ANOTHER SUCCESS
(from pg. 1)

real sharp in their 508th jackets and helmets. M.G. Melner of Fort Benjamin Harrison was our guest that evening and spoke to us briefly. He complimented us on our esprit-de-corps and positive attitudes. After a delicious meal we ended the evening with dancing, group pictures, and many rounds of friendly bull sessions. They lasted well into the morning. In fact, at 6:45 the next morning, Bruno Prezto (A) woke O.B. Hill trying to find an open C.P.

The 1980 reunion was formally closed at our memorial luncheon Sunday. We light a candle for each of our battle honors to commemorate our fallen comrades and a candle in honor of our fallen friends in the French, Dutch, and Belgian underground and resistance forces. When taps was sounded, there wasn't a dry eye in the place.

The tough part of each reunion is saying goodbye to everyone. We all go our separate ways with pleasant memories and recalled accomplishments. We'll see each other next year in Daytona Beach.

DUES INFO

We are happy to get dues anytime and we do keep a record. You can pay any amount. A lot of members pay very generously to support those who can't.

If you should care to check anytime, drop me a note. Of course, our bookkeeper says don't bother to check-pay twice!

The dues and income from sales go to support our News Letter, correspondence, printing, etc. Donations marked as such go into the Memorial Fund. The Association officers are unpaid. Their time and considerable out of pocket expenses are donated.

THANKS TO THE PETRYS AND THE INDY GANG

All of us thank Joe and Mildred Petry for organizing and chairing the Indy reunion. Joe even had a son get married just before the reunion. That was to keep his left hand busy while the right hand worked for us. Thanks to Joe's 508th buddies too. They helped with the many things that made Indy a success. He couldn't have done it alone, and you fellows came through as only 508ers can.

The elegant 508th posters that were in the hotel lobbies were done by Joe's sister. The poppy corsages at the dinner dance were done by VFW friends.

You all did a splendid job making the rest of us feel like kings and we thank you.

REUNION SITES

There was a change in the plans to make Atlanta the 1981 site. To go anywhere we need a chairman and many willing helpers. When that isn't possible, adjustments have to be made. As it worked out, Daytona Beach is about geographically the same and Mike Wargo assures us he and his Florida buddies are adequate.

Fort Bragg for 1982 was unanimous. That's when we celebrate the 40th year of activation of the Regiment. We will time our reunion with the ceremonies at Fort Bragg which will be in the fall. Fort Bragg always makes us feel welcome. When firm dates are known, our chairmen, Jim Smith (F) and Hock Merritt (Hq.1st) will let us know.

It was also unanimous to go to the West Coast in 1983. Those coasters have always come in a close second on any site selection so it was voted to go there in '83. We'll pick the city in next years business meeting.

TAPS

Our buddy Jim Mooney (I) didn't make it back from the hospital this last time. He was in the hospital during the reunion and passed away shortly after. He will be remembered as the little guy with the big smile in the wheelchair at all the reunions and on the last tour to Europe.

We also learned of the passing of Father Kenny, our Catholic chaplain.

Don Johnson and Ralph Perrico, both of H Company, won't be with us either. Harry Roll informed me of their passing.

Jim Jackson of D Company died in an auto accident in December.

All of these men will be well remembered and missed by their families and buddies.

1981 OFFICERS

The election of officers at the business meeting produced this team for 1981.

Chairman: O.B. Hill-917 McCarthy Court, El Segunio, Calif. 90245

President: Bob Chisolm-601 Las Olas Ct., El Paso, Tex. 79932

V'President: Fran Mahan-2341 Colgate Dr., Fayetteville, NC 28304

Treasurer: Jim Smith-1405 Valencia Dr., Fayettville, NC 28303

Secretary: Jim Allariyce-335 Ariuesi St., Frankenmuth, MI 48734

It seems that we no sooner get a president and he's gone. Would it be worthwhile to make the office a two year term? The second year could benefit from the first years experience.

REUNION SIGHTINGS

Bob Gass (E) brought in metallic prints of our unit citations. The Presidential, French, Netherlands, and Belgian Citations were printed black on silver. They are very attractive framed or unframed. Thanks to Bob, the income from their sale went into the treasury.

Fritz Mitschke (Hq-Hq) was there dressed fit to kill. His story about buying the clothing had everyone chuckling.

Dawn Chisolm, that cute young thing at the registration desk, is Bob's daughter (I). She put in hours registering us.

Dawn has helped Bob find lost 508ers too. She has written the 20 major papers in 25 states to advertise for old 508ers. This has been successful with over 100 of you found that way.

The Hardie boys showed. John (C), Jim (504) and George (NAVY). Those C Company people have a way of making friends.

Had a good visit with Harold Botteon (I). He has a bar in Baltimore.

The framed color sketch that Andy Skilvis (Hq.3rd) made of the trooper boarding the plane was won in a drawing by Mrs. Ed Bucek (G). Thanks for donating the proceeds to the treasury, Andy.

Bill & Bettie Knutson (C) had to leave early when Bill contracted pneumonia. She wrote to thank the 508th family for their help and prayers. Bill is snapping back and they both will be with us in Daytona Beach.

Jean Trahin (Hq.2nd) found us for the first time. He stayed in the reserves and made Major General. Quite an accomplishment.

Milt & Kitty Mackey (B) wrote to say that she is on the mend. Kitty took a bad slip at the convention & ended in a wheelchair. Milt was left with the garden to care for by himself and has lost 10 lbs.

MEMORIALS APPROVED

At the business meeting, proposals were made to establish 508th Memorials in Arlington National Cemetery, Washington DC and in Beek, Holland.

As you remember, our main objective in Holland was to seize and hold the high ground. We did. Beek is on the flats at the foot of that high ground just outside of Nijmegen.

The Beek Memorial is a project the people of Beek will heartily support. They will match our funds and provide all of the administrative and organizational support. Their representative, Phillip Van Eltern and his son Servaas, attended this years convention. Phillip spoke to us about the memorial project. He is quietly confident and very interested in seeing the project through.

O.B. Hill is our liason with the city of Beek for the memorial. We expect it to be dedicated Sept. 17, 1981 during our tour of Europe.

The Arlington Memorial has been greatly aided by our own man on the spot Ray Costanzo, (I). Ray is the superintendent of the cemetery. It was reassuring to be talking to a buddy instead of a stranger when we started to investigate this idea. The Memorial will be in two parts. There will be a 508th Memorial Plaque to be displayed in the trophy room in the Memorial Amphitheater. The second part will be the planting of a clump of trees near the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The planting will be memorialized with a stone and bronze marker.

The presentation and dedication of the memorial is done with a formal military ceremony which we can all attend. The project is scheduled for completion in the fall of 1982. This will be in sequence with our '82 convention at Fort Bragg.

Bob Chisolm (I) is our coordinator of the Arlington Memorial.

These two memorials with the ones in Normandy and Nottingham give us a total of four. Your past support has made the others possible. Your continued support will make Beek and Arlington successful. If you wish to be a part of these memorials, send your donations to our treasurer, Jim Smith, 1403 Valencia Drive, Fayetteville, NC 28303. We will need approximately $5,000.00.

OUTGOING PRESIDENT

Rock Merritt was our 1980 President. His duties ended with the finish of the Indy reunion. We'll miss Rock and his organizational skills. Sally was his good right arm too. They both had the interests of the Association first and foremost. Thanks to both of you for helping to make us what we have become.

A.V.A.

Amis Veterans American. To us who don't remember our French it's Friends of the American Veterans. It was started in Normandy by Madame Renaud to organize all of those people who treat us so wonderfully when we visit over there. They have their own distinctive badge for identification.

O.B.Hill had one of the badges in Indy, and it was admired by many of you. He will try to get some for those of you who expressed interest. Madame Thomas our good friend in Chef Du Pont and who was with us in Indy has carried this request back home with her. When we hear from her, the News Letter will let you know how to get one.

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Jim Allardyce

George Wingate can help some people in Normandy today. If you know his whereabouts, contact me.