

You may notice that some of the items covered in the following paragraph have been reported earlier in the 75th *BulgeBusters* newsletter. Our excuse for being redundant is that this is important stuff, and it's being repeated in case you missed it the first time around.

First of all, we regret to report that we have lost another member of AT company: Dalton D. Raze, our 1st Platoon Leader, died at 4:25 p.m. on 28 December 1997 of a massive stroke. Grace, his wife, thoughtfully called me on the 29th. She characterized his death as peaceful and not entirely unexpected. He is survived by Grace and their four children, Vicki, Darlene, Randy, and James. He was buried in full uniform at Arlington National Cemetery.

Another regrettable death, important to those who knew of his predilection towards the 75th (and in fact, towards all Americans), was that of Raphael d'Amico-Gerard, a Belgian who informally helped guide American visitors to the Belgian Bulge battlegrounds of WW2. He died November 22, 1997 of a heart attack, a man of only 53 years. He is survived by his wife, Marie-Paule, a fine lady who accompanied him as an advisor on the 1991 and 1994 battlefield tours and was fluent in English (which, regrettably, Raphael was not). News of his death was first reported by Paul B. Ellis, Jr., K-290 in the January 1998 BB.

Surgeries reported in the BB include John DeNegre's (Feb '98) and Gordon Berry's (lung cancer) in the Sep '97 issue. I missed the latter report until it was called to my attention by Bill Nichols. I (RC) wish you guys would let us know about such occurrences first hand so we wouldn't run the risk of missing them entirely (instead of just being late with them).

Other recent happenings of note for our brethren (and last surviving platoon leaders), include 50th Wedding anniversaries celebrated by both Bill and Marti Nichols and Bob and Tommie McElroy.

The N.E.C. meeting being held in Peoria April 15-19 will likely be attended by newly appointed members of AT-290, Bill Black and Ray Fary. More about Ray later. For those of you who are not acquainted with its function (I was not), the N.E.C. stands for National Executive Committee and consists of seven members, 5 elected and 2 presidential appointees. Their function is to review and make decisions as to their individual merit, all agenda items submitted for consideration by the General Assembly. Many Association members attend these meetings, but not necessarily as members of the N.E.C.

Miscellaneous

Be sure to read Bill Kirk's letter in the March 1998 issue of the BB. Bill has been adopted as a "Friend" of AT-290 and he fellowships with our company at reunions, largely because he is a neighbor of Rudy's...and even though he really belongs to HQ-2nd Bn-290. His account of the Dortmund action is interesting. Bill and his wife thoughtfully shared their vehicle with Rudy for transportation to and from the Kansas City reunion and regrettably, were obliged to also share with him the trauma of an automobile accident in Illinois, as they were returning to Cambridge from '97 Reunion activities (including a visit up north in Minnesota with me (RC) and others. Happily, no one was seriously injured in either of the cars involved in the accident.

Two Autobiographical Sketches

In response to my (RC's) often voiced plea, we have some army-life stories to share with you. This time there are two that I've been saving for release now. If you have one you'd like to share with the rest of us, or have already done so and we've somehow overlooked it, please get in touch with me and either submit it or else report the omission.

Raymond E. Fary was an early member of AT-290 but was transferred out of the division at about the time an infusion of men *into* it occurred from ASTP, Air Cadets, and other abandoned Army programs. In his own words, Ray says:

My army time began in March 1943 at Ft Leonard Wood, MO with the AT Co., 1st Platoon, 1st Squad under Sergeants Groves and Isaacs. We were a young group. But we were well trained in our job assignments. In April 1944, 44 of us left the AT Company for Europe as replacements. We were all together through Fort Meade, Camp Myles Standish and on the HMS Exchequer (a British transport), until we reached a Replacement Depot, where we were separated. Edward Claypool was sent to the 5th Infantry Division and Leno Silvani to M Company of the 39th Regiment, 9th Inf Div. Leno was KIA at Ste Lo in early August 1944. I've never found out what happened to the other 41 men.

On 1 June 1944, after a couple of days in the Replacement Depot, I was the first of the 44 to ship out. I was assigned as a gunner on a 57mm anti-tank gun in Battery C, 80th Airborne Bn, 82nd Airborne Division. I suppose I replaced a casualty the 82nd suffered during the Normandy invasion. The battalion had subsequent casualties, but the outfit I was in wasn't called into action. In July the 82nd returned to England to reorganize and get ready for its next mission. By this time I had become a Glider Trooper.

Our next mission was called "Market Garden" [remember "A Bridge Too Far", courtesy of Field Marshall Montgomery?.....Ed.]. This is where a 19-year old from Indiana was to experience adventure. It began with a three hour and twenty minute glider ride from England to Holland at an elevation of a thousand feet. I saw English countryside, the chalk cliffs of Dover, the English Channel, Belgium, Holland, flew through German anti-aircraft fire and finally landed in a pasture just a kilometer from the village of Grave...about 35 miles behind the German lines. Our landing was a hard one, but no one was injured. The right wing of our glider collapsed and the landing gear broke loose. For the next 8 weeks it was adventure 24 hours a day. Then came December and the Bulge. Very few men missed that one. The 82nd continued advancing east. At war's end we were 60 miles northwest of Berlin. I came home in one piece with no wounds but several close calls.

I played professional baseball for three years and also was an Active Reservist. I retired in October 1984 as a SGM with 41 years 7 months service.

[Ray was elected to the N.E.C. at the 22 August 1997 meeting of the Association's General Assembly....Ed.]

LeRoy V. Anderson was drafted on December 7, 1942 in Washington D.C., where he had lived for five years. He was sent to Fort Bragg NC for 6-weeks of basic training and then sent on to Fort Totten, Long Island to spend 5 months with the Coast Artillery. In April 1943 he applied for ASTP and upon acceptance, was sent to Clarkson College in Potsdam, NY. In March 1944, as ASTP disbanded, he was sent to Camp Polk and the swamps of Louisiana for six weeks of "maneuvers" before going on to Camp Breckinridge KY and the 3rd Platoon of AT Company, 290th Infantry.

Following six months of training there, he embarked for Europe aboard the USAT Brazil, landing at Swansea, Wales. After six weeks of training and preparation near the small ocean-side town of Porthcawl, Wales, he, along with AT Company embarked in December for France and thence Belgium. After developing frozen feet In January of 1945, he was hospitalized in

Salisbury, England for 4 months. He never returned to AT Company, but instead was accepted into an "On the Job Training Program" sponsored by the Army, whereby he interned with London's Knight, Frank, & Rutledge, the third largest auction firm in England. He was subsequently released by the Army to work for that firm and did so for 6 months, during which time it was engaged in auctioning off the contents of the German Embassy in London. In his words, it was a "very interesting experience".

In January 1946, LeRoy returned to the U.S. aboard the aircraft carrier S.S. Wasp, receiving his Army Discharge on January 26, 1946 at Fort Meade MD. His family consists of a wife, Anja, and three daughters: Brenda, Elizabeth, and Jessica. After 38 years of running his own business in Ashtabula, OH, LeRoy retired in 1983. Then, for a year and a half he tried living in Guadalajara, Mexico, but in 1985 settled in San Antonio, TX.

An Editorial

I'm sure that most of you were aware that the town of Hohenlimburg AT Company occupied, was in Germany's county of Westphalia, as was the town of Plettenberg where the 75th Division's headquarters had been set up. What you may *not* be aware of, is that a German citizen of Plettenberg named Rolf G. Wilmink has become very active over the past four or five years, trying to recover several artifacts he claims to be the property of his town's government but which turned up missing after the war...allegedly "liberated" by American troops. Apparently, the only troops having the opportunity to collect such souvenirs were from the 75th, and Wilmink has been earnestly pursuing any and all 75th personnel via personal visits to reunions (notably the one held in Atlanta June 1995) and contacts through the Internet, trying to have the articles in question returned. Two recent developments in this case are of interest, inasmuch as the 75th is getting the blame for the "liberations" in question. I'll try and share them with you, betraying as little prejudice as possible. But first of all, I'll name and briefly describe what I call the Plettenberg treasures, articles that turned up missing during the period April 22 to May 8, 1945. Firstly, an "old mayor's chain of office" which the mayor of Plettenberg traditionally wore about his neck to indicate his authority. I understand that its value lies more in its history than in the materials of which it is made. Secondly, is an honorary flag on white silk awarded in 1843 to the "Plettenberger Schützengesellschaft 1836 e.V." by Queen Elizabeth of Prussia. Thirdly, an 1866 flag awarded to the "Youth rifle association", bears Plettenberg's emblem (castle-like graphics surmounted by German iron cross) and the inscription "Unseren ruhmgekrönten Kriegern 1866". Now, as to the developments I spoke of:

1. After some five decades of obscurity, the Plettenberg treasures seem to have surfaced in the hands of an antique dealer, a "Nazi collector" located in the Philadelphia area. This collector claims that he came into their possession when a friend of his bought them at a flea market. He is adamant in his refusal to give them up. Wilmink is pretty obviously seeking some sort of leverage, gentle persuasion or otherwise, to force their return.

2. Philip R. Bradley* has provided Mr. Wilmink with a studied judgment that the missing articles pre-dated WW2, were not connected to the Nazi apparatus, and therefore, were not legitimate war booty. Thus, they had been stolen, and the Army would have had to classify the thieves as "looters". Consequently, Philip allowed, since a thief cannot pass good title to stolen articles, the purchaser of such articles cannot receive good title. Therefore, by definition,

* Formerly an artillery spotter with the 897th FA Bn. of the 75th, now a practicing attorney in Columbus, Ohio having retired from the Judge Advocate General's Corps as a Lt Colonel.

they remain the property of Plettenberg. Philip went on to volunteer the legal remedies Wilmink might pursue in order to recover the missing chain and flags. So, despite the difficulties im-

posed by distance, in the near future Mr. Wilmink might be expected to start repossession proceedings through the German Embassy in the U.S. (especially if there is one in Philadelphia) or through the U.S. Embassy in Germany. I think (hope) that this might lead Mr. Wilmink into some embarrassments he may not foresee, because of the following considerations.

A matter of principle is involved. Even if one concedes that some GI souvenir collecting was indeed looting, doesn't it seem like a contradiction of principle for a German citizen to exhibit such indignation over looting when it's an incontrovertible fact (and currently the subject of TV documentaries and news media coverage) that his own countrymen spent nearly ten years thoroughly looting Europe...*And have yet to return* or even *acknowledge possession* of much privately owned artworks, jewelry, and other personal valuables they stole from helpless people? You can make up your own minds, but I think the American antique dealer in the Plettenberg case has as much or more right to his "booty" as the Germans had to the things they stole from their fellow Europeans from 1936 to 1945.