

# **“Thundering Herd”**

Newsletter of the 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division Association

Website: <http://www.8th-armored.org/>

E-Mail address: [8thArmoredDivision@gmail.com](mailto:8thArmoredDivision@gmail.com)



Ardennes, Rhineland, Central Europe

## **Winter – 2014/2015 - Vol. III No. 1**

Dear Veterans of the 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division, Members of the Association, Descendants, Family and Friends,

*Merry Christmas – Happy New Year – Happy Holidays!*



**Welcome to the Winter 2014/2015 edition of the 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division Association** Newsletter. We hope to continue to use this newsletter as a means to communicate with the membership, share information, tell the stories of the veterans, and preserve the memory of this gallant fighting unit.

A number of original veterans, descendants and those committed to commemorating the service of the veterans of the 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division are maintaining the Association and are planning events, ceremonies and dissemination of articles on the history of the Division.

**We invite all living veterans of the 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division to join the Association as honorary members**, no dues required, although donations are welcomed.

**We are also seeking members who share our mission and goals.**

Please take a look at the outstanding Division website <http://www.8th-armored.org/>.

The website is created and maintained by Okey Taylor, C-58<sup>th</sup> AIB and Scott Thorpe.

**Please visit our website to obtain membership applications** to fill out, print and mail to the Association Mailing address:

8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division Association  
2345 E. Dauphin St  
Philadelphia, PA 19125

Use the E-Mail address: [8thArmoredDivision@gmail.com](mailto:8thArmoredDivision@gmail.com)

To communicate further, we also feature a '**Facebook**' account and ask all interested to enroll in order to stay in contact and share comments and information:

New Association 'Facebook' page: <http://www.facebook.com/groups/269231523148647/>

**Our future plans include:**

- \* a possible WWII Reunion Tour in Europe
- \* a Memorial marker at Arlington National Cemetery
- \* 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division themed merchandise

**We are in need of volunteers to assist with the following:**

- \* **Assistant Web Master** – needed to take over for Okey Taylor who wishes to pass over the operation of the site he designed so beautifully, and to assist Scott Thorpe.
- \* **Reunion Volunteers** - a volunteer committee is needed to work on the details of a potential annual reunion/Association meeting where yearly business, elections and planning can be conducted.

**Winter 2014 – 2015 Edition of the 'Thundering Herd'**

Newsletter of the 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division Association

**President's Message:** Holiday greetings from the 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division Association!

I hope that everyone will enjoy a warm and wonderful Holiday season, filled with the joys and pleasures of Christmas, Hanukkah and the New Year!

## **Brief Report on the Reunion: 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division Association –meeting and Tour to Valley Forge, PA. September 12- 14, 2014**

Again this year in 2014, you saw the first full year of operation of the re-organized Association. We held our annual Reunion in September. It included the organizational meeting of the Association the evening before our Reunion tour for Association members and guests. The Reunion tour included visiting sites in the Valley Forge, PA area. At the annual meeting, we hosted approximately 7 original veterans, and 18 members and friends and family.

### **Meeting Sept 12:**

A crowd of 26 including 7 WWII veterans met on Friday evening September, 12, 2014 at the Old Holiday Inn in Bensalem, PA (Now – Best Western Plus) to hold the annual Reunion of the 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division Association, hear of new ideas and programs and elect 2014-2015 officers. President, Andy Waskie called the meeting to order and presented the meeting agenda. After opening introductions and greetings, an invocation was delivered by the president on behalf of Association Chaplain Rev. Jim Christenson.

### **Elected were:**

- Milton Shapiro (7-HQ) – President Emeritus
- Andy Waskie – President
- Gloria Layne – Vice President
- Carol Neumann – Treasurer
- Okey Taylor (58 AIB) – Historian
- David Clare – Research Specialist

### **Committees:**

- Sally Shapiro– Newsletter & Merchandise
- Joseph Neddill – Membership

## **8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division Association Officers – Committee Chairs – 2014-2015**

### **Milton Shapiro (7-HQ) – President Emeritus**

11 Riverside Dr – APT 6F-E

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[mjshapiro@rcn.com](mailto:mjshapiro@rcn.com)

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member – Medical Detachment 7<sup>th</sup> AID

### **Andy Waskie – President**

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215-423-3930

**Gloria Layne – Vice President**

Gloria Zuccarella B. Layne

64 N. Lyle Ave.

Tenafly, N.J. 07670

Proud Daughter of S/Sgt **Rocco Michael Zuccarella** - 49AIB Co A

[laynes@peoplepc.com](mailto:laynes@peoplepc.com)

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**Carol Neumann (my wife) – Treasurer**

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Philadelphia, PA 19125

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**Okey Taylor (58 AIB) – Historian**

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**David Clare – Research Specialist for the 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division**

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Glen Cove, N.Y. 11542

[claredjcinc@aol.com](mailto:claredjcinc@aol.com)

516-361-3195

**Rev. Norm Olson - Chaplain**

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Plymouth, MN. 55442

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**Committees:**

**Sally Shapiro – Newsletter**

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**Joseph Neddill (membership Committee Chair)**

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Waterford, CT 06385  
[Neddillj@ct.metrocast.net](mailto:Neddillj@ct.metrocast.net)  
860-287-0735

**Unfilled positions (seeking volunteers):**

- \*Reunions/Events
- \*Fund Raising
- \*Communications
- \*Web Master (assistants)

**After a discussion of the future of the Association and events and projects,** a buffet dinner was enjoyed by all attendees with refreshments and beverages.

- The attendees were informed about the efforts to place a memorial stone to the 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division at **Arlington National Cemetery**. The marker has been designed, some funds are available, but permission is still being negotiated. It is hoped that we will be able to dedicate the stone memorial next year – 2015!
- An 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division **Memorial** to be placed at an appropriate locale was also discussed. Areas under consideration are: The new Army Museum at Ft Belvoir, VA; or at Freedoms Foundation. More details will follow and funds will have to be raised.
- Attendees enjoyed a large display of artifacts, photos, books, documents, and souvenirs of the 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division veterans.

On Saturday, a contingent of Association members and 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division veterans departed Bensalem for a **tour of the Valley Forge** area. The itinerary included:

- **Battle of the Bugle Memorial** on the campus of Valley Forge Military Academy for photo opportunities in a light rain

- **Freedoms Foundation** campus with the Medal of Honor Grove, where an acre section for each state features the names and records of that state's MOF recipients. There are also a number of Army Division memorials for the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Armored Division, and the 29<sup>th</sup> & 75<sup>th</sup> Infantry Divisions. The site also has a number of inspiring monuments to Washington and other Founders, and a new memorial to the 'Gold Star' Families that was being installed as we arrived. We were the first to visit the new memorial! We also met a Board member who spoke to the group about Freedoms Foundation and the new memorial.
- A fine lunch followed at a nearby 'home-style' restaurant G-Lounge of Valley Forge.
- After lunch we continued our tour by visiting **Valley Forge National Park**, site of the winter encampment of the Continental Army in 1777 – 1778, a very trying time for the battered and bruised Army of Washington. We visited the **Visitor's Center, Museum** and Gift Shop, as well as viewed the Park's informational **film** on the site.
- A **driving tour** followed and a stop at the **Washington Chapel** saw a military wedding (Navy) in progress.
- We left the area to return to Bensalem in our van and visited the **PRAX Casino** close to the hotel. David Clare was able to win enough money to pay for his tolls for the trip home to Long Island, N.Y.
- **All agreed that they enjoyed the Reunion Tour immensely, and it was also agreed by the Association officers that there would be a 2015 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division Association Reunion next year. Time and place to be determined!**
- **Photos of the 2014 Reunion and Valley Forge Tour**  
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/126740504@N03/>
- Our Association **Facebook** page has become very popular with over 120 participants sharing photos, stories, reminiscences, and details on veterans. I encourage all interested to sign on to Facebook, and then enroll in **Association Facebook page**. Please consider joining for updates and information! <http://www.facebook.com/groups/269231523148647/>
- I have been trying to collect **stories of the 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division**, the veterans, and images to keep in an archive that will be made available to any and all interested. These items, no matter how mundane will be **treasured by future generations and historians. Please send me all the stories and photos you can!**
- I have also embarked on a project to create an '**oral history**' for each and every living veteran to preserve for posterity. At Reunions, we have been able to capture several of the

8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division attendees. I will try to continue this effort, but also encourage the families to use the iPhone technology to **interview loved ones and send the file to me** at [8thArmoredDivision@gmail.com](mailto:8thArmoredDivision@gmail.com)

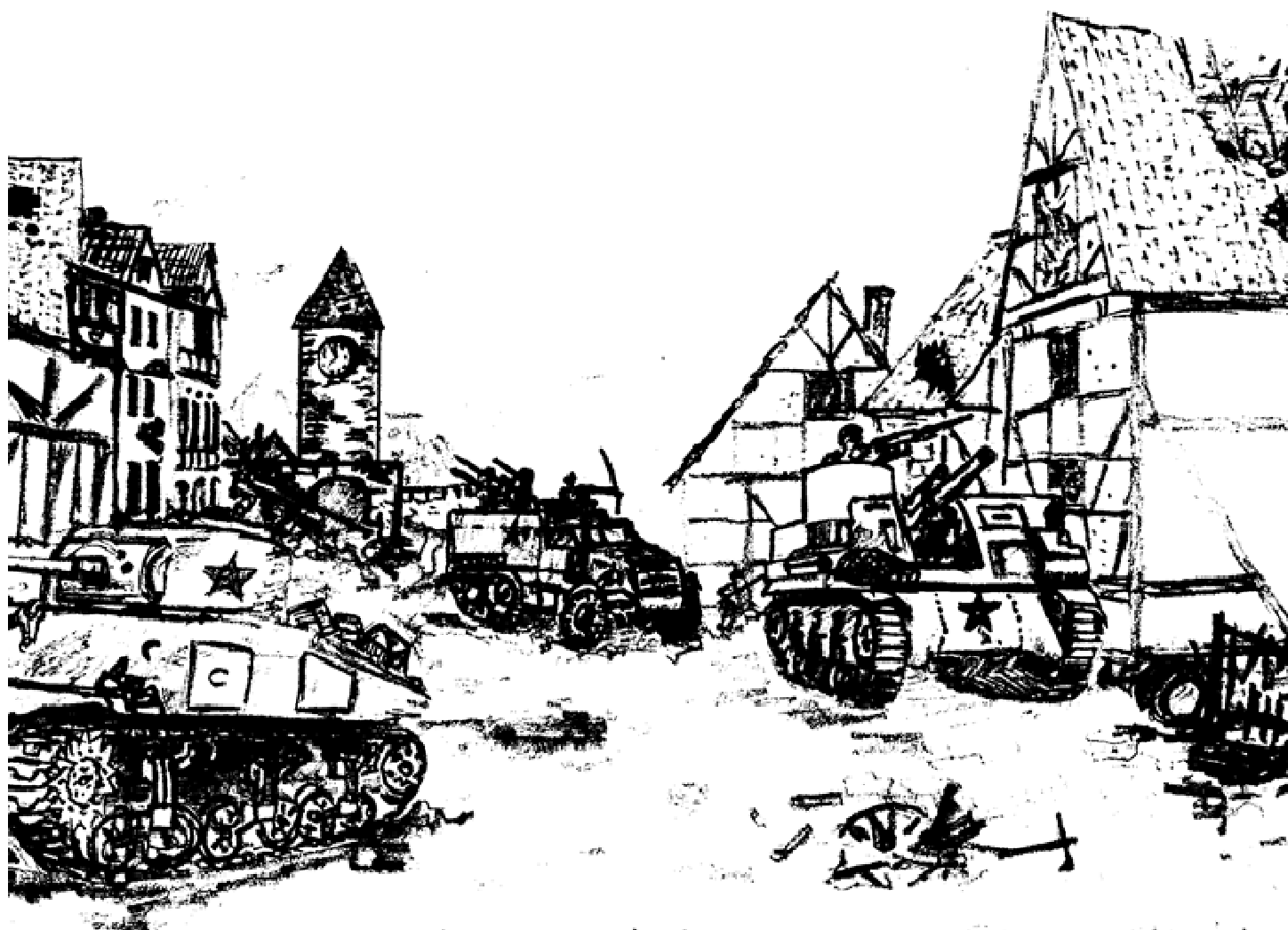
- **Souvenirs!** We still have a number of 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division souvenir items: a **decal** and **Association baseball cap**. The caps are gratis to original veterans, \$10 to members, \$15 to non-members sent via post. If a veteran has not received the cap, they should contact me, preferably by e-mail [8thArmoredDivision@gmail.com](mailto:8thArmoredDivision@gmail.com)
- **New member:** Ralph Peeters of the Netherlands has adopted the graves of 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division men who lie at rest in **Margraten American Soldiers' Cemetery in the Netherlands**. He has volunteered to be our correspondent in Europe and keep us informed of the events and actions on behalf of our honored dead, interred in Europe. His articles will appear in future 'Thundering Herd' newsletters. Thank you Ralph Peeters!
- **8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division Association Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery**  
I am presently close to completing the work on obtaining a **permanent memorial marker** to place and dedicate to the veterans of the Division who paid the ultimate sacrifice during WWII, and all the veterans living and deceased. I have filed a formal request and have been in contact with the Cemetery officials. We are in the final stages of approval and have raised the funds necessary to manufacture, place and dedicate the stone marker. We hope to be able to dedicate the marker in **September of 2015** at next year's Reunion.
- We will also in the process of re-establishing our **non-profit status** with the IRS for the Association in order to grant tax deductions for such donations. This process is being taken care of by a good friend of mine who is a lawyer and a member of my Legion Post.
- **8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division Association Memorial Approved for placement at the U.S. Army Museum, Ft Belvoir, VA.**  
At the 2013 Reunion, the idea of placing a memorial plaque to honor all veterans of the 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division was discussed and approved. This project will take a bit of time. I am including three (3) sample designs for the commemorative bronze plaque for your review. *Please let me know which plaque you like best!* As soon as I have the winning design, and the estimated costs, I will begin to request support in the form of donations.  
All honors to the men of the 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division both living and deceased!
- **Three designs for the 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division memorial plaque by artist Andrew Chernak. Please let me know which design you like BEST.**

**No #1**



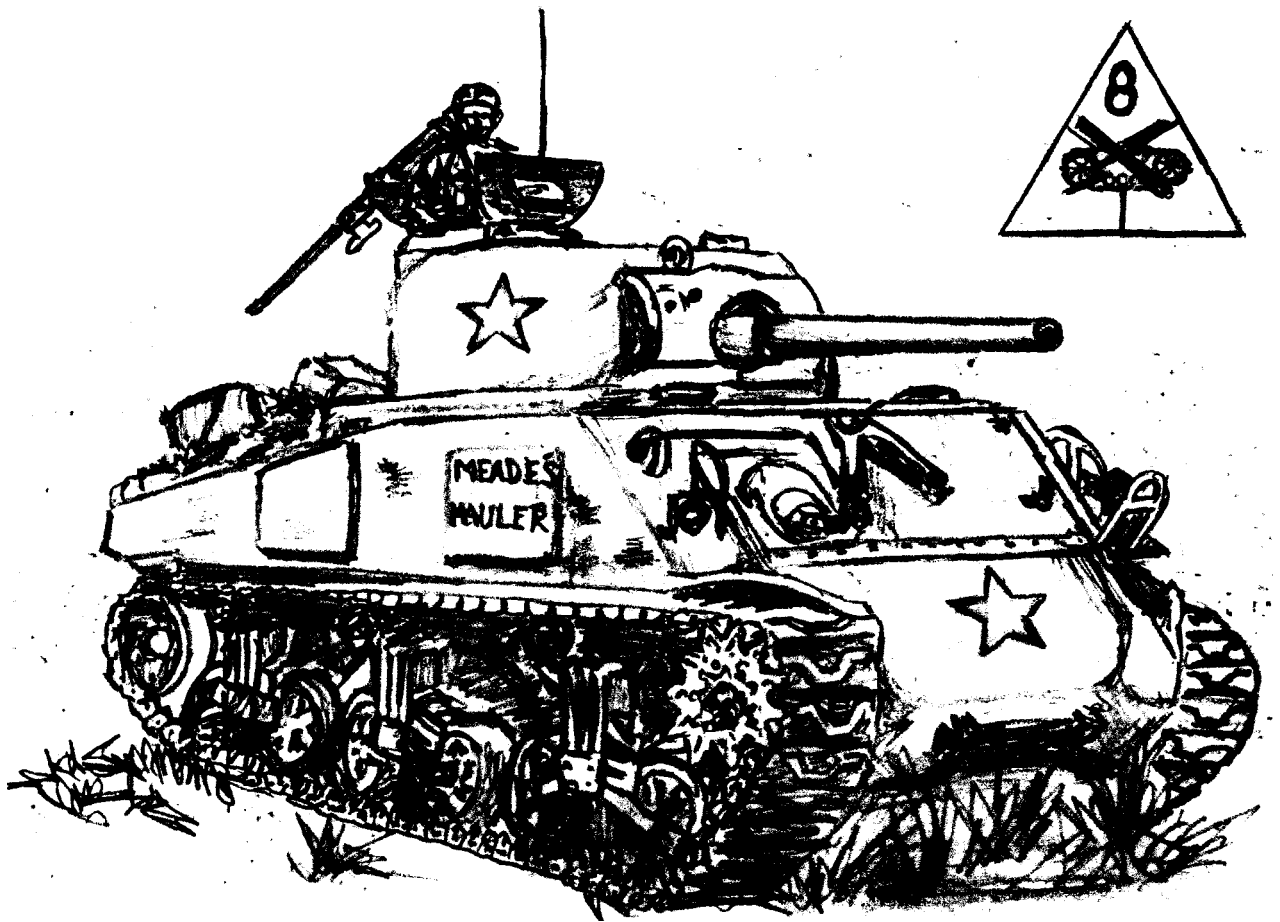
MORTIER DIVISION

# 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division in Action

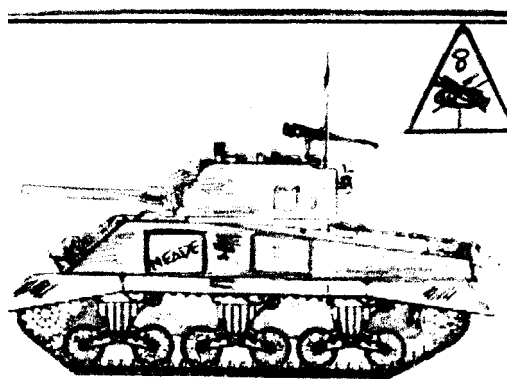


INLAND • CENTRAL

No #2



No #3



- **015 Dues are also now requested.**

**Dues are important, especially now when the Association is planning on placing and dedicating memorials to the veterans, living and dead of the 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division!** Original 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division veterans are honorary members and pay no dues. To maintain the business of the Association, there are numerous costs involved. The monies to pay debts and responsibilities come from your memberships and any donations we may receive. Please be generous. **Dues keep our mission and sacred trust to memorialize the service of the veterans of the 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division and its memory alive into posterity.**

- 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division Veterans: Honorary members (no dues required)
- Individual membership: \$20
- Family membership includes all members of a household: \$35.
- Donations are gratefully accepted from any source!

Please send your membership dues via check made out to:

***8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division Association***

Mail to:

Andy Waskie

2345 E. Dauphin St

Philadelphia, PA 19125

tel – 215-423-3930

2015 marks the **70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge, where the 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division first tasted combat in early January, 1945.** The courage and fortitude of the American Soldier was tested against great adversity. The quality of their response ultimately meant the victory of freedom over tyranny. We salute the Greatest Generation!

FREE FOR WWII VETERANS  
**BULGE REENACTMENT**  
**70th Anniversary Commemoration Battle**

**TO HONOR VETERANS of WORLD WAR II**  
Battle of the Bulge Commemoration Living History Week  
Fort Indiantown Gap, Annville, Pennsylvania  
January 27th - February 1st, 2015

The World War II Federation invites all vets to the Battle of the Bulge Reenactment this coming January and will again be honoring the WW II Veterans during the week, with a **special Reception scheduled for Friday, 30 Jan 2015, free for WWII Vets.**

**On Tues 27 Jan 2015**, Veterans may arrive after 1400 hours on. As usual, the Veterans will have a hospitality suite set up in their barracks as well as memorabilia & video displays. We most likely will be in **Area 13**.

- Attendees should bring a pillow, sheets and a blanket (or a sleeping bag) for their bunk as well as wash cloth and towel and shower clogs. All sleeping is on lower bunks.
- Enjoy a week of camaraderie, relaxation, WWII videos, stories and hospitality and a chance to relive your basic training days in original WWII Barracks.
- Enjoy the transformation of the barracks area by the reenactors to WWII period and enjoy the many restored WWII vehicles.
- Meet reenactors who are interested in learning from WWII veterans about the period as well as the respect that they hold for you.

**On Friday, 30 Jan 2015**, the Federation will salute the Veterans.

- At 1600 hours there will be a **Wreath Laying** at the VBOB Monument and 21 gun salute, and a Tactical Battle Briefing at 1630 Hours in the Community Club.
- There will be a **free reception** there for WWII Veterans at 1700 hours (others may attend at \$15.00).
- As usual there will be **1940 Movies** in Veterans Bldg #12-15 and hospitality in the Veterans' Barracks. The cost of the event is \$70.00 which includes 5 nights bunk in the barracks and Dinner and Period Entertainment USO-type show on the Saturday night.

On **Saturday, 31 January** at 1030 hours, **Veteran Tour of the Battlefield**, at 1300 Public Battle scenario Area 12, 1700 Buses leave for Community Club, 1800 Dinner, 2000 period entertainment & talent show followed by dancing.

WWII Veterans will be free again this year. Non Veterans accompanied by a WWII veteran and others will pay \$75 for the 5 nights in the barracks which will also include the Saturday nite dinner (Option A). Those not wanting the Sat Nite Dinner the fee is \$50 (Option B). Those not staying in the Barracks but want the Sat nite dinner the fee is \$30. For details go to <http://www.wwiifederation.org/c5>

**Bulge Bugle – Newsletter of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge (VBOB)**

<http://www.veteransofthebattleofthebulge.org/the-newsletter>

Interesting reminiscences follow from **veteran Bob Schulte**, and a new veteran member of the Association. I asked him to send me some old stories of his service. What he wrote appears below. It may be a bit controversial, but sincere and still a vivid memory after so many years.

I hope you enjoy his stories. (forgive the text which I had to scan)

Dear Andy,

Please forgive me for being so tardy in responding to you. Many medical problems have come my way interrupting my, ah hem, 'social life' I have been. very busy in such matters as there is a d aily social calendar here at my retirement residence plus my own family life which includes many friends. It is a job remembering to call certain people, to send out birthday cards and friendly notes and so forth. Also, there is a myriad of activities too here (at home--which I call it) and the affairs of social nature with my many friends.

Unfortunately, these friends formerly were husbands and wives but now dwindling down to a number of widows. I am still very happy to be fortunate enough that I am invited to their family and extended family affairs.

This month I have been invited to five graduation parties of which I am definitely attending and, of course, putting a dent in my bank-roll. These younger people

have really been so nice to me as we grew older and now their grandchildren are taking over; always glad to see you and provide assistance.

Well now, sincere thanks to you for sending me such great items.

I wondered - 'what can this be'" - when I saw the package and then upon opening the parcel discovered the "goodies" you had sent to me.

Each one was admired and I especially am fond of the Association cap. I plan to wear it when we sit out on our patio here which is huge and 'show-off' a bit. Once in a while the men (who are outnumbered here by far) will speak about their military service. I don't get into particulars because I had one heck of a time in my outfit.

Andy, we had some of the most cowardly and egocentric officers you could ever find. I was in the 405th Armored Field Artillery HQ Battery and when overseas I was the Battery Commander's chauffeur, Captain XXXX (you know, I disliked him so much and can't remember his first name) who was despicable. For one thing, he would make me change places in the jeep when we approached any type of edifice as he knew snipers always aimed for the passenger. I said to him, "Captain, why don't you just give me your helmet with the captain's insignia"?

He and First Lt. XXX always bunked together and they were the most unclean persons imaginable, while demanding that the personnel were always bathed and shaved, etc. The Lt•• once took off his shoes and socks and his ankles were BLACK.

The Capt. had the entire back of our jeep filled with things that he had confiscated- a huge blow-up bed-roll, a radio, clothing, a Musette bag filled with rolls of film that he had taken (which later disappeared and he wanted to court martial me because he accused me of stealing it!)

He just simply confiscated my 'C-Rations', which was better food, and gave me his "K-Rations", which were less likeable. When I complained once, he said "What can you do about it?" "Prove it".

He almost killed me once - we were moving out, assembling, and there was 'gun silence'. The Captain got into the jeep and set his carbine down too hard; the butt

hit the floor of the jeep sharply and the gun fired. Colonel Logan came and was infuriated asking, "Who the \*(@¢%\*+=#@ shot that gun?".

The captain without batting an eye thumbed and tilted his head toward me. The Colonel slowly shook his head from side to side, his mouth went up on one side and he winked at me--getting the picture. The bullet from the Captain's gun just tipped my helmet and pushed it askew on my head. If that bullet had been a fraction of an inch off I could have been killed or severely wounded. What an A--hole!!!! I had my both hands on the steering wheel and the Captain was still holding the gun--now---come on---

Someone had a huge wooden box assembled, larger than a coffin. William Kelly, the bugler (he had no bugle) was assigned this box and made 'man-servant' to the officers. This box was filled with fine table linens, place settings, cloth napkins, cutlery and other table items. No matter where we were quartered, Kelly (he cried over this) had to seek out a house or building wherein the officers would be quartered and set the table, get food ready or procure from the mess truck and wait on these guys. Can you imagine this? In Germany, in combat!

The Captain would look through the town or, whatever, select a 'suitable' building wherein the officers would be quartered, notify Kelly and then the other men would be told they could disperse.

These were just a few of the things that the Captain perpetrated on us. You know, I often wondered why some of these officers were not shot by one of the men in the Battery. They were just horrid!

The Captain had the entire back of the jeep, as I told you, with 'his belongings' and I tied my bed-roll on the bumper. One day in a bombed out village, I was looking through the debris of a home and found a kaleidoscope and was perusing it and the viewing cards. The Captain saw me and accused me of looting and was going to see that I was court martialed. He actually accused me of 'stealing'. I looked up at him and said, "What about your things in the back of the jeep? He lowered his head and walked away.

Gosh, Andy. This is turning into a composition. I could go on and on, telling some weird tales about our former Battery Commander, Captain XXX – talk about a ‘nut

case'. Yikes! Well, again I am delighted with everything you have sent me. You were very generous and kind and a charitable person, and I am happy to correspond with you.”

Sincerely,  
Bob Schulte  
HQ Battery 405th Armored Field Artillery

**About 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division veteran – ‘Tim’ Ruggieri on Veterans’ Day 2014**

Attending veterans were asked to rise to be acknowledged and presented with the finest Veteran’s hats representing their branch of service in the order of Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, and Coast Guard. Closing the program was the playing of Taps on the harmonica by **WWII veteran Tim Ruggieri (8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division)** and the singing by all of “God Bless America.”

From Newsletter - ROTA-RECORD - Official publication of the Rotary Club of Lewistown, District 7360 - Burnham, PA November 11, 2014 No. 20– RI Year 2014/2015 **Welcome NEW Honorary Veteran members of the 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division Association:**

**\*Eric Steiner**

[ericsf9@comcast.net](mailto:ericsf9@comcast.net)

Co. A, 58th Armored Infantry Battalion Eric Steiner, 8th Armored from Camp Polk through Pilsen, Czechoslovakia

**\*Fred Witty**

900 Millercrest Dr.

Johnson City, TN 37604

423-926-9212

[fwittyBSUret@charter.net](mailto:fwittyBSUret@charter.net)

member – Co. C 58<sup>th</sup> AIB 1<sup>st</sup> sergeant

**\*James B. Strickland**

148th Signal Company, S/SGT at the time of his discharge on November 28th 1945. European African Middle Eastern Service medal with 3 Bronze stars.



Battles and Campaigns Ardennes Rhineland, GO40 WD 45 Central Europe GO 46  
WD 45

grandson – Jody Cake

[jcake@vreal.org](mailto:jcake@vreal.org)

**\*Tim Ruggieri**

member – 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division

[717-483-6531](tel:717-483-6531)

Atilio "Tim" & Maria Ruggieri

# 9 Stonewood Drive, Extended

Belleville, PA 17004

contact – Dale Armstrong

[darmstrong@chx105.com](mailto:darmstrong@chx105.com)

**\*Donald 'Don' E. Wolff**

519 East Tam O'Shanter

Phoenix, AZ 85022

[dewolff@cox.net](mailto:dewolff@cox.net)

602-908-4925

member – HQ-80<sup>th</sup> Tank Battalion corporal

**\*John Ken Berthold**

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Orlando, FL 32822

407-482-8214

No E-Mail

Svc Co, 80<sup>th</sup> Tank Battalion

**\*Clinton E. Barnhart**

827 S.E. 207<sup>th</sup> Rd.

Deepwater, MO 64740

816-282-8306 OR 816-616-2181

[doris.barnhart@yahoo.com](mailto:doris.barnhart@yahoo.com)

[gltheiss@yahoo.com](mailto:gltheiss@yahoo.com)

member – Med-7<sup>th</sup> AIB

**URGENT NEED TO CONTACT LIVING VETERANS of the 8<sup>th</sup> Armored  
Division!**

We keep finding more and more 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division Veterans who are still with us, yet they are not active members. In addition, in recent months we've come upon veterans who never knew the 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division Association existed and others whom we lost contact with for reasons unknown, and I'm sure we lost many because they could no longer afford the dues, which is now FREE to all original 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division Veterans.

So there have to be more put there! In fact, in the past few weeks have contacted me about their service. **But, it now seems that the only way we are going to find them is through social media, family and friends.**

So if you have Facebook page, an email list, anything, we need to BLAST out to as many people as possible and have them forward a notice to everyone they know that we are in search of 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division Veterans and that they should contact us either by email ([8thArmoredDivision@gmail.com](mailto:8thArmoredDivision@gmail.com)) or on Facebook **8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division Association 'Facebook' page**

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/269231523148647/>

**So please, let's all put out a call and let's find as many Veterans as we can!**

Andy Waskie, President

8th Armored Division Association

In Memoriam

Recent 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division veterans who have passed on:

Dr. Robert Wright – HQ-130

Leonard J. March – 78<sup>th</sup> Medical Battalion

Hugo R Edwards – C-18<sup>th</sup> Tank Battalion