

'Thundering Herd'

Newsletter of the 8th Armored Division Association



[Ardennes](#), [Rhineland](#), [Central Europe](#)

Winter/Spring –2017 – 2018 Vol. VI No. 2

Dear Veterans of the 8th Armored Division, Members of the Association,
Descendants, Family and Friends,

Merry Christmas -Happy Holidays- Happy New Year!



Welcome to the 'Winter'/Spring 2017-2018 edition of the Association Newsletter – 'The Thundering Herd'. 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 8th Armored Division are maintaining the Association and are planning events, ceremonies and dissemination of articles on the history of the Division. May sincere thanks to them!

We invite all living veterans of the 8th 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 web site created by Okey Taylor, C-58th AIB and maintained by webmaster – Scott Thorpe. There you can obtain membership applications to fill out and mail to the Association address:

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

8th Armored Division Association
2345 E. Dauphin St
Philadelphia, PA 19125

Use the E-Mail address: 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/>

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

- * **Reunions** - a volunteer committee to work on the details of a potential annual reunion/Association meeting where yearly business and elections and planning can be conducted.

Association Officers for 2018:

President Emeritus (Honorary)
Vern Miller – 130-HQ
vernsdarkroom@aol.com

President – Andy Waskie, Jr.
8thArmoredDivision@gmail.com

Vice President – Gloria Zuccarella Layne
glayne731@gmail.com

Treasurer – Carol Neumann
carol.neumann@tuhs.temple.edu

Membership Chair – Joseph Nesdill
nesdillj@ct.metrocast.net

Association Web master – Scott Thorpe & Okey Taylor (58-C) (retired)

scott@scottthorpeflyfishing.com

Newsletter Committee Chairs – Rick Miller & Sally Shapiro (with help from yours truly)

r-jmiller1@juno.com

sally.shapiro@rcn.com

8th Armored Division Historian - David Clare

claredjcinc@aol.com

President's Message:

Festive Holiday Greetings from the 8th Armored Division Association!

Update & Report on our project to create a permanent memorial to the 8th Armored Division at the Museum of the US Army – Ft Belvoir, VA.

Dear Veterans of the 8th Armored Division, Association Members and Friends,

I would like to update you on the status of our 8th Armored Division Association stated goal of erecting a memorial marker to the Division and its veterans. We had hoped to place this marker at Arlington National Cemetery. But, we were informed two years ago, that due to political and space conditions, our application to place the marker at Arlington was denied by the then Secretary of the Army, Eric Fanning.

We have contacted officials of the Museum of the Army, due to open in 2019 and consulted with them about placing a bronze memorial plaque marker there in a prominent location. They have indicated to me that should we present to them this memorial, they would indeed, honor the service of the veterans of the 8th Armored Division and secure a prominent and honorable position on permanent display at the Museum, which is expected to be a huge success and attract millions of visitors who will view the memorial and honor the 8th Armored Division and its veterans. Therefore, we have been raising money to obtain the necessary funds to finance the Memorial, and have the marker ready to install and dedicate it in 2019.

The design is the one which I sent out for approval in 2015. It is a beautiful bronze sculpture of elements of the 8th Armored Division in action in the spring of 1945 in Central Europe. It will be 30" x 38'. The sculptor is a friend, and a Vietnam veteran well known in the military art community – Andrew Chernak.

The estimated cost (with discount) is \$14,000.

Now, this may seem like a high cost, but, considering what we will receive and its prominent location, it seems reasonable.

To date, we have made three (3) payments to the sculptor, but we still owe approximately \$5000 to complete both the Memorial plaque and the smaller Donors' plaque. We are continuing a wide ranging campaign to obtain the funds for the memorial. Of course, I would like to encourage all members and veterans of the 8th Armored Division Association to make a generous donation.

Any person, who donates at least **\$100**, will have his/her name inscribed on a special 'donors' plaque which will also be placed next to the memorial, and can dedicate the donation in the name of a veteran of the 'Thundering Herd'!

Please be generous!

Please make the check out to:

8th Armored Division Association

Mail to:

8th Armored Division Association

2345 E. Dauphin St

Philadelphia, PA 19125

New Designs for the Memorial in Bronze





PLEASE Send in your membership dues for 2018!

8th Armored Division Association

2345 E. Dauphin St

Philadelphia, PA 19125

8th Armored Division veterans are GRATIS!

Please make the check out to:

8th Armored Division Association

Individual membership - \$20

Family membership - \$35

Your dues support the work of the Association and are the life blood of the organization!

Join our 8th Armored Division Association 'Facebook' page! It is an excellent way of staying in touch with other veterans, members and families.

Association 'Facebook' page. Please consider joining for updates and information!

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

Association web page: <http://www.8th-armored.org/>

Present 8th Armored Division Merchandise

Make checks payable to: 8th Armored Division Association

NEW item: solid bronze 8th Armored Division grave marker & flag holder designed by famous sculptor Andrew Chernak

Cost (inclusive - \$100)



We still have 8th Armored Division caps:
Gratis to 8th Armored Division veterans
\$20 to all others (includes postage & handling)

8th Armored Division Challenge Coins
\$5 per piece

8th Armored Division shoulder patches
\$10 a piece

8th Armored Division License plates
\$20 apiece (includes postage & handling)

8th Armored Division Decals
\$5 a piece





Thanks to David Clare

Men of the 8th Armored who were KIA (killed in action) during Battle of Bulge but whose remains were returned home after the war:

2Lt Homer B Young

Pfc Robert L Bates

Pvt James J Coady

Capt Herman M Grover

Rest in Peace - Your Sacrifice is Not Forgotten!



Former President Emeritus of the 8th Armored Division Association; Milton Shapier 7-Medic & daughter Sally Shapiro, officer of the Association. They send greetings and regrets that they could not attend the 2017 Reunion

‘Akkers van Margraten’ = Fields of Margraten

Researching American WWII graves (including those of 8th Armored Division men) who rest in Margraten American Military Cemetery in the Netherlands

<http://www.akkersvanmargraten.nl/>

<http://historiek.net/documentaire-akkers-van-margraten/9036/>

<http://getuigenverhalen.nl/projecten/akkers-van-margraten-1>

http://www.bensavelkoul.nl/Akkers_van_Margraten.htm

Adopt a Grave at Margraten

www.adoptiegraven-margraten.nl

Stichting Verenigde Adoptanten Amerikaanse Oorlogsgraven
Foundation United Adopters American War Graves

<http://www.fieldsofhonor-database.com/index.php/en/margraten-2>



Welcome on the homepage of the website of the *Stichting Verenigde Adoptanten Amerikaanse Oorlogsgraven* (Foundation United Adopters American War Graves) in the Netherlands, which was founded in July 2011.

The foundation is a collective of Belgian and Dutch adopters of American WWII soldiers' graves at American War Cemeteries in Belgium, France, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands, whose primary aim it is *to give a face to each one of these soldiers*. The foundation hopes to keep alive the memory to these men and women in honor of the sacrifices for our freedom. The foundation aims to achieve this goal by extensively conducting research to all soldiers buried at the American War Cemeteries Ardennes, Epinal, Henri-Chapelle, Lorraine, Luxembourg, and Netherlands (Margraten). All available information and photos will be accessible through our online Fields of Honor - Database. Other than that, this foundation aims to achieve its goal through the project The Faces of Margraten. Of course, you will be able to find more information on our Foundation and our projects on this website.

We also aim to help other adopters and relatives in their research. Therefore, you will find on our website various tips on where to find and request information on American soldiers who served in World War Two and who gave their lives for freedom. Some of these tips can be found in the "Research" section on this website; others can be found on our forum. It is also in our forums that you are able to ask for help yourself. On this website, we, moreover, offer some information for the various Adopt-A-Grave programs that exist throughout Europe. However, it is important to note that we do not maintain any of the programs ourselves. To learn more about the organizations that maintain these programs, please visit the Adopting A Grave section of this website.

Please note that this is not the website of the Foundation for Adopting Graves American Cemetery Margraten, which maintains the Adopt-A-Grave program for the American War Cemetery Netherlands in Margraten. To go to their website, please click [here](http://www.adoptiegraven-margraten.nl/).

<http://www.adoptiegraven-margraten.nl/>



FIELDS OF HONOR - DATABASE REACHES...

Eight years after the first digital memorial page had been added to the Fields of Honor - Database,...

22,500 VISITORS THE FACES OF...

22,500 people have visited The Faces of Margraten tribute at the Netherlands American Cemetery and...

FORUM

On our forum it is possible to show how your research to 'your' soldier develops and to request help in your research. Other than that, the forum is also a place where other adopters meet and discuss various topics. Moreover, you can also download letters and forms from our forums, which you can use to request information in the United States.

Especially for non-Dutch speaking members, we have set up two forums in our English section. We hope to welcome you there! [Please click here to go to the forums.](http://www.svaao.nl/forum/)

<http://www.svaao.nl/forum/>



FIELDS OF HONOR - DATABASE

The Fields of Honor - Database is a website maintained by our foundation. On this website you can find information about thousands of soldiers who have been buried or commemorated at the American War Cemeteries Ardennes, Epinal, Henri-Chapelle, Lorraine, Luxembourg, and Netherlands. Researching these men and women will span many years and, therefore, information about many soldiers is still missing. [Click here to visit the database.](http://www.fieldsofhonor-database.com/index.php/en/)

<http://www.fieldsofhonor-database.com/index.php/en/>

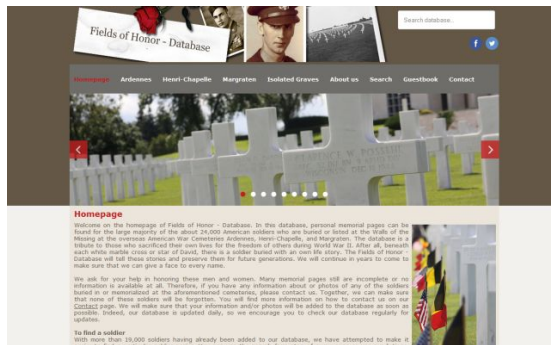


SHOP

In our shop, we sell products which will help you with your research to the soldier whose grave you taking care of or products related to our foundation's mission. Whenever you buy something in our shop, you will support our foundation. At the moment, we only ship to Europe and North America. [Click here to go to our Shop.](https://www.svaao.nl/shop/)

<https://www.svaao.nl/shop/>

The Fields of Honor - Database



The foundation's most important mission is to do research to the approximately 45,000 American soldiers who died in World War Two and were buried in or are listed as missing at the American War Cemeteries Ardennes and Henri-Chapelle in Belgium, the American War Cemeteries Lorraine and Epinal in France, the American War Cemetery Luxembourg in Luxembourg, and the American War Cemetery in Margraten, the Netherlands. All this information is added to the online Fields of Honor - Database, which is maintained by this foundation. So far, information about approximately 24,000 American soldiers has already been added to this database.

Gathering and adding information about these men takes a lot of effort and time. Therefore, we are looking for people who want to join our team of volunteers to help us to honor each man and woman buried in these cemeteries. Moreover, if you have any (additional) information about any soldier who is buried in or listed as missing at one of these cemeteries, please let us know. If you are interested to work with us on this project or if you have any information about a soldier that cannot be found in our database yet, please contact us then at info@fieldsofhonor-database.com. More information about the Fields of Honor - Database can be found [here](#). Or visit the database directly at www.fieldsofhonor-database.com.

PERSON IN OUR DATABASE



NEW IN OUR SHOP



Military Vehicles of WWII

“An iconic WWII vehicle was the **GMC 2½-ton 6x6 U.S. Army cargo truck** that saw heavy service in both World War II and the Korean War. The original ‘Deuce and a Half’ formed the backbone of the famed Red Ball Express that kept Allied armies supplied as they pushed eastward after the Normandy invasion. The official GMC designation was CCKW.

“The vehicle came in many variants, including open or closed cab, long wheel base and short, and over a score of specialized models. It began to be phased out with the deployment of the 6x6 M35 in 1950, but remained in active U.S. service until the mid-1960s. It is related to the Chevrolet G506, built at the same factory.

HISTORY

“In 1939-1940 the US Army Ordnance Corps was developing a 2½-ton load-rated 6x6 tactical truck that could operate off-road in all weather. General Motors, already supplying modified commercial trucks to the Army, modified the 1939 ACKWX – built for the French Army – into the

CCKW. The General Motors design was chosen by the Army and went into production at GM’s Yellow Truck and Coach Division’s Pontiac, MI, plant alongside 6x4 CCWs. Later they were also manufactured at GM’s St. Louis, MO, Chevrolet plant.

“By the end of production in 1945, 562,750 CCKWs in all variants had been built, a total second only to the ‘Jeep’

ENGINE AND DRIVE-LINE

“The truck was equipped with the GMC 270 engine, an overhead valve I6 with 91 horsepower at 2750rpm and 216 pound force-feet at 1400rpm. A 3-25/32 in. bore by 4 in. stroke gave a 269.5 cu in displacement. This engine was designed for commercial trucks, and was reliable in service.

“The transmission was a Warner T93 5-speed with a direct 4th gear and overdrive 5th gear. The transfer case had high and low gears, and engaged the front axle. Originally all axles were a Timken split type, later trucks also used GM ‘banjo’ types.

CHASSIS

“The CCKW had a ladder frame chassis with three driven beam axles, the front on leaf springs, the rear tandem on leaf springs with locating arms. There were two wheelbases, the short Model 352 and the long Model 353. The short, 145 in. (measurements are from the centerline of the front axle to the centerline of rear bogie) was used with a short cargo bed as an artillery prime mover for 75mm and 105mm howitzers.

All other models used the long 164 in. wheelbase. Tires were 7.50-20, brakes were hydraulic with vacuum assist. “Some were fitted with 10,000 lb front-mounted winches.

A winch added 300 pounds and 14 inches. Some open cab chassis were cut in half behind the cab for air transport. Each half was a load, at the vehicle’s destination; the halves were bolted back together.

VERSIONS

Van body with canvas roof and doors in place Gasoline tanker (750 U.S. gal.). CCKW-353-B2 gun truck with M45 Quadmount on M20 trailer in bed, loading ramps attached to side

“Initially, all versions used a modified commercial closed cab design having a metal roof and doors. By 1944 an open cab version, with a canvas roof and doors, was used. This was easier to build, and the roof could be removed to lower the DUKW in use by American troops in France allowed a 15 ft., and later 17 ft. cargo bed to be fitted. The first 50 produced had closed cabs, all others were open. The cab over design made engine maintenance difficult. As a result, only 7235 were built, none with a front-mounted winch.

“The CCW was a conventional cab with tandem rear axles, an on-road, 5-ton 6x4 truck version of the CCKW that lacked only its front wheel drive. A beam front axle was used, with the transfer case locked in high range.

“The DUKW (known as a Duck) is a six-wheeldrive amphibious modification of the 2½ ton CCKW trucks used by the U.S. military in World War II.

“Designed by a partnership under military auspices of Sparkman & Stephens and General Motors Corporation (GMC), the DUKW was used for the transportation of goods and troops over land and water. Excelling at approaching and crossing beaches in amphibious warfare attacks, it was intended only to last long enough to meet the demands of combat. Surviving DUKWs have since found popularity as tourist craft in marine environments.

“The term *DUKW* is not an acronym, but rather the original GMC nomenclature designating the company’s manufacturing code for the military wheeled amphibious landing-craft – with D standing for 1942, U for utility (amphibious), K for all-wheel drive, and W for 2 powered rear axles.

“Developed by the National Defense Research Committee and the Office of Scientific Research and Development to solve the problem of resupply to units which had just performed an amphibious landing, it was initially rejected by the armed services. When a United States Coast Guard patrol craft ran aground on a sand bar near Provincetown, MA, an experimental DUKW happened to be in the area for a demonstration. Winds up to 60 knots, rain, and heavy surf prevented conventional craft from rescuing the seven stranded Coast Guardsmen, but the DUKW had no trouble, and military opposition to the DUKW melted. The DUKW later proved its seaworthiness by crossing the English Channel.

“The final production design was perfected by a few engineers at Yellow Truck & Coach in Pontiac, MI. The vehicle was built by Yellow Truck and Coach Co. (GMC Truck and Coach

Div. after 1943) at their Pontiac West Assembly Plant and Chevrolet Div. of General Motors Corp. at their St. Louis Truck Assembly Plant; 21,147 were manufactured before production ended in 1945.

“The DUKW was built around the GMC AFKWX, a cabover-engine (COE) version of the GMC CCKW six-wheeldrive military truck, with the addition of a watertight hull shipping height. 1 in 4 of cabs had a machine gun mounting ring above the co-driver’s position.

“The CCKW provided a platform for the widest range of bodies on any U.S. military vehicle, with the 12 ft cargo version being the most common. As steel was more heavily rationed during the course of the war, the steel cargo bed was replaced by a wooden one. Wooden beds proved unsatisfactory and a ‘composite’ bed with steel sides, framing, and wooden bottom slats was developed. However, the composite bed was still unsatisfactory and the bed design returned to all steel.

“A standard rectangular van configuration was used in communications, medical, workshop, and many other specialty roles. Special built vans were also used.

SPECIALIZED VARIATIONS

“Many specialized variants of the basic 6×6 were made, some in small numbers, including some converted in the field.

These include:

- Air compressor
- Bomb service
- Chemical decontaminating
- Chemical handling
- Dental operating van
- Dump truck
- Fire engine
- Fuel & gas tankers (750 U.S. gal.)
- Fuel & oil handling (660 U.S. gal.), (750 U.S. gal.)
- High lift
- K-53 radio equip. van
- K-60 radio equip. van
- Map reproduction van
- Ordnance maintenance van
- Pipeline equipment
- Pontoon bolster
- Shop equipment GP repair van
- Surgical van
- Water purification van
- Water tanker (700 U.S. gal.)
- Welder’s truck

AFKWX

“The AFKWX 353, a cab over engine cargo bed version of the CCKW, went into production alongside it in 1942 at Yellow’s Pontiac plant and Chevrolet’s in St. Louis. Otherwise mechanically identical, its compact cabin design GMC AFKWX-353 cab-over-engine went to the National Reunion can speak about how hot Texas was. Of course most of us went to see the

up-dates to the 12th Armored Division Museum in Abilene. Since I am writing this in June it is impossible to describe the changes that have been made, but expectations are high. Our Museum is something of which we should all be proud. They do a good job!

Speaking of Museums: As a Legacy member of the 12th Armored Division Association and a lover of unrevised history, I joined the 'Army Historical Foundation' which was, and is, raising money for the 'National Museum of the United States Army' a couple of years ago.

The Museum is being built north of Fort Belvoir's Main Gate. Fort Belvoir is between 20 and 25 miles north of Stafford on Rt. 1. It is also just around the corner from Mt. Vernon, the home of the first commanding officer of the Army (some of you might have gone there on the tour bus the last time the reunion was in DC).

The plans for the museum are extensive, including a Memorial Garden, a Parade Ground, a Wall of Honor, and an Army Theater. The major galleries will tell the stories of how the Army has impacted the Founding of our Nation, the Global War, the Cold War, and the Changing World. There will be a lot more in the museum than what has been included here, but it does seem to be an all-inclusive program.

The aerial photo was taken in March of this year. You can contact www.armyhistory.org for construction updates and more photos. The second photo shows progress as the first and a propeller. It was powered by a 269.5 cu in GMC Model 270 straight-six engine. A five-speed overdrive transmission drove a transfer case for the propeller, then a two-speed transfer case to drive the axles. The propeller and front axle were selectable from their transfer case. A power take-off on the transmission drove the air-compressor and winch. It weighed 13,000 lbs. empty and operated at 50 miles per hour on road and 5.5 knots (6.3 mph) on water. It was 31 feet long, 8 feet 3 inches wide, 7 feet 2 inches high with the folding canvas top down, and 8 feet 9 inches high with the top up.

"It was not an armored vehicle, being plated with sheet steel between 1/16 and 1/8 inches thick to minimize weight. A high-capacity bilge pump system kept it afloat if the thin hull was breached by holes up to 2 inches in diameter. One in four DUKWs mounted a .50-caliber Browning heavy machine gun on a ring mount.

"The DUKW was the first vehicle to allow the driver to vary the tire pressure from inside the cab, an accomplishment of a Speir's device. The tires could be fully inflated for hard surfaces such as roads and less inflated for softer surfaces, especially beach sand. This added to great versatility as an amphibious vehicle. This feature is now standard on many military vehicles.

"The windshields were provided by GM rival Libbey Glass (Ford)."

Thanks to Tom Stevens of the 12th Armored Division Association 'Hell Cats'
August, 2017

Like the 399rd and 404th Armored Field Artillery Battalions, the 405th was comprised of Battalion Headquarters and five batteries:

Headquarters, A, B, C and Service. There was also a medical detachment.

Battalion Headquarters group included the Battalion Commander, who was a Lieutenant Colonel; an Executive Officer, who was typically a Major, the Battalion S-2 (intelligence) officer, the Battalion S-3 (operations) officer, and several other officers and enlisted personnel.

In conjunction with Headquarters Battery, Battalion Headquarters was responsible for the command and operation of the Battalion, as well as the reconnaissance, communication,

observation, and division liaison duties. The Fire Direction Center was also part of Headquarters. The armored field artillery battalions often operated under the direction of Division Artillery and Combat Command A, B or R so a constant line of communication needed to be maintained. From an organizational standpoint, a battery can be compared to an infantry company in the Army or Marines, which typically have 100-150 members. Each battery had a battery commander (BC), who was usually a Captain. The three firing batteries, A, B, and C, were each equipped with six self-propelled M7 105mm gun motor carriages ('Priest'). The M7 incorporates a 105mm howitzer on a M4 tank chassis.

Each M7 was categorized as a Section, with a section leader and six other crew members comprising the section. There were six sections in each firing battery. The firing battery also included maintenance, recon, fire control, and supply sections. In addition to the firepower of A, B, and C batteries, Headquarters battery also included M4 tanks, which mounted either a 75mm cannon or a 105mm howitzer. This added another 3 guns to the Battalion.

An important function of both Headquarters and the firing batteries was forward observation. Essentially, this was the identification of targets and requesting fire missions. It wasn't unusual for the forward observers, or FOs, to be attached to an armored infantry unit within the 8th Armored Division or to a unit within another division that was being supported by the 8th at the time, to coordinate supporting artillery fire.

The FOs would operate on foot, from a half-track, or in one of Headquarters' M4s. The FOs were both officers and enlisted men. Battalion Headquarters also had two liaison aircraft that were used for artillery spotting duties. The aircraft were the L-4 'Grasshopper' and they were crewed by a pilot and air observer.

Service Battery was responsible for supplying the Battalion with fuel, lubricants, ammunition, rations and water, performing clerical duties, and the recovery and maintenance of its vehicles. (The firing batteries also had their own maintenance personnel). Service Battery's vehicles included 'peeps' (what armored units called Jeeps), 2-1/2 ton and 3/4 ton trucks, an M1A1 wrecker (think of a very big tow truck!), and two M32 armored recovery vehicles (ARVs). Service Battery included the Battalion S-1 (personnel) officer, the Battalion S-4 (logistics) officer, and the Battalion motor officer.

'In Memoriam'

In Memory of Marion Robert Ballard, 8th Armored Division

In Memory of **S/Sgt Marion Robert Ballard** - Battery B, 405th Armored Field Artillery
August 7, 1924 - October 24, 2017

Marion R. Ballard, 93, of Columbia, passed away peacefully on October 24, 2017 at South Hampton Place skilled nursing facility in Columbia, MO.

Funeral services were held at 3:00 p.m. Saturday, October 28th, with visitation from 1:00 p.m. until service time at Memorial Funeral Home Chapel in Columbia. Burial will follow at Memorial Park Cemetery in Columbia with full military honors.

Marion was born on August 7, 1924 in Bagnell, Missouri to Asa and Mary (Howser) Ballard who preceded him in death.

He married Shirley Jean Wisner on July 4, 1948, in Osceola, Missouri, and she survives.

While a student at the University of Missouri in 1943, Marion was drafted into the Army. He

served in the European Campaign during World War II reaching the rank of Army Staff SGT in the 8th Armored Division. Marion returned to the University of Missouri after his service and completed his Bachelor of Science in Agriculture degree in 1948.

Marion and his family returned to Columbia in 1952 and he worked for the University of Missouri for 34 years before retiring in 1986. During retirement Marion and Shirley developed a passion for volunteering at The Food Bank. For over 10 years Marion volunteered mornings five days a week and Shirley joined him three days a week.

Survivors include daughter Sharon Brim (Bob) of St Charles, son Roger Ballard (Susan) of Columbia, daughter Rita Millner of Nokomis, FL, daughter Tami Firsick (Brian) of Fenton, eight grandchildren and 10 great grandchildren. He was also preceded in death by one son-in-law, Rob Millner and three brothers, Harold Ballard, Glen Ballard and Olen Ballard.



Johnson Walker (1923 – 2017)

Co. C, 398th Armored Field Artillery, 8th Armored Division in WWII

The world lost a beautiful soul. Our beloved dad, grandpa, and father-in-law, Johnson James Walker, age 93, entered into rest on Saturday, January 14, 2017, surrounded by his loving family. Johnson was born on July 30, 1923 in New Haven, Connecticut, to Johnson and Katherine Kiloy (parents). He had two brothers Harold, Edward, and a sister, Alicia Walker Hannon who predeceased him. While working at the New Haven and Hartford Railroad, he attended and graduated from Fairfield University with a Bachelor's Degree in 1953 and had four children, Michael, Kathleen, Jacqueline, and Patricia. He later went on to earn a Master's Degree and 6th year certificate from Fairfield University.

Johnson served in the [Army](#) in [World War II](#), from 1943 – 1945, in the 8th Armored Division, in an M7 'Priest' Self-propelled gun or Motorized Artillery.

He served in Europe, fighting in Holland, France, Belgium, Germany, and Czechoslovakia.

Besides the war and a brief period in later years, Johnson spent his whole life in West Haven, serving for thirty years in West Haven Public Schools. He was a beloved teacher and guidance counselor in West Haven, working with students at Thompson School, Giannotti Junior High, and West Haven High School. He maintained many lifelong relationships with students and had a few attend his 90th birthday party.

Johnson, with his wife Barbara, a nurse, found great joy in their family and friends. They took trips to Florida, eventually buying a condo there that holds many great memories. They also enjoyed skiing with friends and annual trips to Cape Cod with their children and grandchildren. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Thursday January 19th (2017) at St Lawrence Church at 11am. Burial followed at St. Lawrence Cemetery, New Haven, Connecticut . To leave a condolence or tribute please visit

<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/nhregister/obituary.aspx?pid=183619244>

Published in The New Haven Register on Jan. 17, 2017



Russell D. Pollitt – 58-C passed away on October 12, 2017

(From David Clare) – October 12, 2017

It is with much sadness in my heart to say my friend Russell D Pollitt passed away today. He lived in Manchester, Ohio where was born, raised, left to go to War & came home and raised his family. Rest in Peace my friend your stories you shared will be passed on!



Russell Pollitt, Ray Baumer,
Replacement, Al Urbaniak, 58-C

Russel Pollitt, 58-C



Russell Pollitt & David Clare – 2016

Russell D Pollitt, Sr.

Russell Dale Pollitt. Sr, age 91 of Manchester, passed away on Wednesday Oct. 11, 2017 at the Hospice of Hope in Maysville, Ky. He was the son of Robert Dodson Pollitt and Lillian Elizabeth Sowers, born on May 9, 1926, in Manchester.

He was a veteran of World War II, serving in the US Army's 8th Armored Division at the Battle of the Bulge, was a past village councilman and Fire Chief of the Manchester Volunteer Fire Department and owner of the Buckeye Inn in Aberdeen. He was a member of V.F.W. Richard L. Dryden Post 8287 and American Legion Matthews-Carter Post 325 and D.A.V.

A funeral service was held on Sunday, Oct. 15, 2017 at the Wilson Home for Funerals in Manchester with Rev. Dale Little officiating. Burial followed at the Manchester, OH Cemetery. Military Services were performed by the Adams County Honor Guard.

<http://www.peoplesdefender.com/2017/10/12/russell-d-pollitt-sr/>

T/4 Leo P. LeBlanc - 36-HQ

<http://www.8th-armored.org/rosters/36hc-rst.htm>

Buried - November 30, 2017 at the R.I. Veterans National Cemetery

LEO P. LeBLANC



Leo LeBlanc – 94 yrs. T-5 (SGT) Leo LeBlanc on right

94, of Coventry, passed away on **Thursday, November 23, 2017** at Riverview Healthcare. Born in Providence, a son of the late Romeo LeBlanc and Anna (Pearson) LeBlanc Johnson, he had lived in Coventry since 1993. He was the beloved companion of Clara Ritchotte.

An [Army](#) veteran of [WWII](#), Leo served in the HQ, Company, 36th Tank Battalion in the 8th Armored Division, serving in the European Theatre. He was the manager of Industrial Relations and Human Resources for the Bulova Watch Company, Providence Division, for 33 years retiring in 1985. He was the Past President of the Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce, Personnel Executive Club and served on many committees; was a member of the Rhode Island Urban League and an honorary member of the NAACP, Providence Chapter.

He is survived by four daughters, Melissa LeBlanc of Natick, MA, Karen Anderson (Jack) and

Laurie Oates (Thomas), of Glocester, RI and Kathy Manocchia (the late Steven), of Rehoboth, MA; a step-daughter, Christine Melton, of Coventry; a sister, Viola Day, of Johnston; seven grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

Services and Burial with Military Honors followed in the Rhode Island Veterans Cemetery, Exeter, RI. Arrangements by the IANNOTTI Funeral Home, Coventry, R.I..

<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/providence/obituary.aspx?pid=187356031>

T/Sgt John R. Hartwell Jr. of the 7th Armed Infantry Battalion, Company A.

<http://www.8th-armored.org/rosters/7a-rstb.htm>

<http://www.8th-armored.org/books/pickett/7a-pickett-1.htm>

John R. Hartwell, age 91, longtime farmer, passed away February 2, 2016, at Risen Son, IA.

John was born on the family farm south east of McClelland, Iowa, on August 16, 1924, to John C. and Irene M. (Hannifan) Hartwell. He graduated from Abraham Lincoln High School in 1942. He served his country in the 8th Armored Division, Co. A, 7th Armored Infantry in WWII from 1943-1946. He was an Infantry Platoon Tech Sgt. and fought in the Battle of the Bulge receiving two Bronze Stars. John married Barbara Brugenhemke on June 19, 1946, at St. Peters Church in Council Bluffs. He farmed the next 60 years and together they raised 7 children. John was a member of St. Peters Church, American Legion Post #2 for over 70 years, and was a 4-H leader for 15 years. He was elected to the county ASCS serving for 10 years, and was a Trustee for Hardin Township for over 52 years.

Survivors include wife, Barbara J., of Council Bluffs; children and spouses, Kathleen (Joe) Hromadka, of McClelland, John F. (Jean C.), of Omaha, Neb., David P. (Jean M.), of McClelland, Steven (Jayne), of Afton, Wyo., Mark (Jane), of McClelland, Charles (Linda), of Greenwood, Neb., and Lisa (Greg) Montgomery, of Council Bluffs; 14 grandchildren; and 14 great grandchildren.

Mass of Christian Burial Saturday, 10 a.m., at St. Peters Church followed immediately by a luncheon in Father Chuck Kottas Hall. Interment was in Hardin Township Cemetery with military rites by American Legion Post #2.

<https://iowa.hometownlocator.com/maps/feature-map,ftc,2,fid,463393,n,hardin%20township%20cemetery.cfm>

Obituary

http://www.nonpareilonline.com/obituaries/john-r-hartwell/article_6147d859-f379-52a8-87a7-c53899fcb835.html



Langenstein-Zwieberge Concentration Camp was liberated by members of the 8th Armored Division in April, 1945.

Here is a short video of the Langenstein-Zwieberge Concentration Camp Memorial:
<https://youtu.be/tAcTzmrdfgw>

The 8th Armored Division soldiers were heavily involved in its liberation.

Thanks to David Clare – 10/25/17



Visserstraat in Linne, Holland-58-C had to clear Feb.1945 causing many casualties

Remember When?

Video on WWII Army Rations

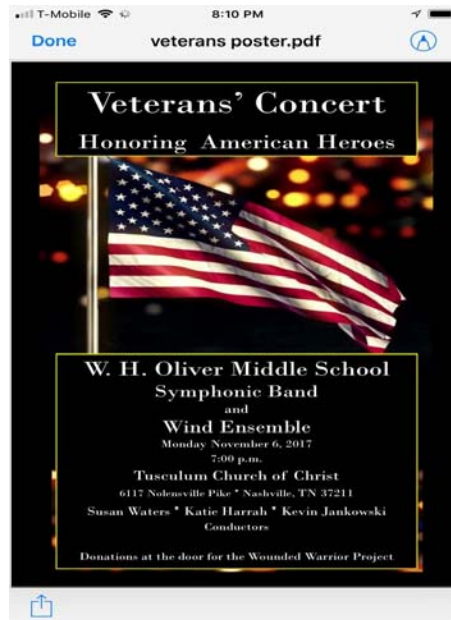
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vz5Y2Zg5w84>

In December 2016 over 100 military vehicles met in the town of Manhay (Belgium, Ardennes) to commemorate the Battle of the Bulge.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YRrXhHG9bpo&feature=youtu.be>

Thanks to Sarah Ferguson!

Sarah's father is Richard W. Pace, 49-HQ. Her daughter's Band is playing a concert for Veterans! Congratulations to Sarah and her talented daughter!



Richard W. Pace, 49-HQ

From Sarah Fergusson

Thanks to ALL for your service from the Oliver Middle School Wind Ensemble Band - Nashville, Tn! The shorter video is the beginning of a song; however the last pic on the slide show is Richard Pace (8th Armored Division veteran 49th Armored Infantry HQ Company).

<https://www.facebook.com/sarah.ferguson.3781/videos/10210826151956850/>

The famous Willys Jeep

This month I thought I would discuss the 1/4 ton truck, more commonly known as the jeep. The story and history of the vehicle follows.

The Willys MB (commonly known as a Jeep, formally as the U.S. Army Truck, 1/4 ton, 4x4) and the Ford GPW are fourwheel drive utility vehicles that were manufactured during World War II. Produced from 1941 to 1945, it evolved postwar into the civilian Jeep CJ, and inspired both an entire category of recreational 4WDs and several generations of military light utility vehicles. Advances in early 20th-century technology resulted in widespread mechanization of the military during World War I. The United States Army deployed four-wheel drive trucks in that war, supplied by Four Wheel Drive Auto Company (FWD) and the Thomas B. Jeffery Company. By

the eve of World War II the United States Department of War had determined it needed a light, cross-country reconnaissance vehicle.

Anxious to have one in time for America's entry into World War II, the U.S. Army solicited proposals from domestic automobile manufacturers for a replacement for its existing, aging light motor vehicles, mainly motorcycles and sidecars, and some Ford Model T's. Marmon-Herrington presented five 4×4 Fords in 1937, and American Bantam delivered three Austin roadsters in 1938. Recognizing the need to create standard specifications, the Army formalized its requirements on July 11, 1940, and submitted them to 135 U.S. automotive manufacturers.

By now the war was under way in Europe, so the Army's need was urgent and demanding: Bids were to be received by July 22, a span of just eleven days. Manufacturers were given 49 days to submit their first prototype and 75 days for completion of 70 test vehicles. The Army's Ordnance Technical Committee specifications were equally demanding:

the vehicle would be four-wheel drive, have a crew of three on a wheelbase of no more than 75 in. that was later upped to 80 in., and track no more than 47 in., feature a fold-down windshield, 660 lb. payload, and be powered by an engine capable of 85 lb.-ft. of torque. The most daunting demand, however, was an empty weight of no more than 1,300 lb. Initially, only American Bantam Car Company and Willys-Overland Motors entered the competition; Ford Motor Company joined later. Though Willys-Overland was the low bidder, Bantam received the bid, being the only company committing to deliver a pilot model in 49 days and production examples in 75. Under the leadership of designer Karl Probst, Bantam built their first prototype, dubbed the 'Blitz Buggy', and delivered it to the Army vehicle test center at Camp Holabird, MD, on Sept. 23, 1940. This presented Army officials with the first of what eventually evolved into the World War II U.S. Army Jeeps: the Willys MB and Ford GPW.

Since Bantam did not have the production capacity or fiscal stability to deliver on the scale needed by the War Department, the other two bidders, Ford and Willys, were encouraged to complete their own pilot models for testing. The contract for the new reconnaissance car was to be determined by trials. As testing of the Bantam prototype took place from Sept. 27 to Oct. 16, Ford and Willys technical representatives present at Holabird were given ample opportunity to study the vehicle's performance. Moreover, in order to expedite production, the War Department forwarded the Bantam blueprints to Ford and Willys, claiming the government owned the design. Bantam did not dispute this move due to its precarious financial situation.

By November 1940, Ford and Willys each submitted prototypes to compete with the Bantam in the Army's trials. The pilot models, the Willys Quad and the Ford Pygmy, turned out very similar to each other and were joined in testing by Bantam's entry, now evolved into a Mark II called the BRC 60. By then the U.S. and its armed forces were already under such pressure that all three cars were declared acceptable, and orders for 1,500 units per company were given for field testing. At this time it was acknowledged the original weight limit (which Bantam had ignored) was unrealistic, and it was raised to 2,160 lb.

For these respective pre-production runs, each vehicle received revisions and a new name. Bantam's became the BRC 40. Production began on March 31, 1941, with a total of 2,605 built up to Dec. 6. As the company could not meet the Army's demand for 75 Jeeps a day, production contracts were also awarded to Willys and to Ford. After reducing the vehicle's weight by 240

pounds, Willys changed the designation to 'MA' for 'Military' model 'A'. The Fords went into production as 'GP', with 'G' for a 'Government' type contract and 'P' commonly used by Ford to designate any passenger car with a wheelbase of 80 in. (2,032 mm).

By July 1941, the War Department desired to standardize and decided to select a single manufacturer to supply them with the next order for 16,000 vehicles. Willys won the contract mostly due to its more powerful engine (the 'Go Devil'), which soldiers raved about, and its lower cost and silhouette. The design features in the Bantam and Ford entries, which were an improvement over the Willys design, were then incorporated into the Willys car, moving it from an 'A' designation to 'B', thus the 'MB' nomenclature. Most notable was a flat wide hood, adapted from Ford GP. By October 1941, it became apparent Willys-Overland could not keep up with the production demand and Ford was contracted to produce them as well. The Ford car was then designated GPW, with the 'W' referring to the 'Willys' licensed design. During World War II, Willys produced 363,000 Jeeps and Ford some 280,000. Approximately 51,000 were exported to the U.S.S.R. under the Lend-Lease program.

A further roughly 13,000 amphibian jeeps were built by Ford under the name GPA (nicknamed 'Seep' for Sea Jeep). Inspired by the larger DUKW, the vehicle was produced too quickly and proved to be too heavy, too unwieldy, and of insufficient freeboard. In spite of participating successfully in the Sicily landings in July 1943, most GPAs were routed to the U.S.S.R. under the Lend-Lease program. The Soviets were sufficiently pleased with its ability to cross rivers to develop their own version of it after the war, the GAZ-46.

Origin of the term 'jeep':

One account of the origin of the term 'jeep' begins when the prototypes were being proven at military bases. The term 'jeep' was used by Army mechanics for any untried or untested vehicles. Although folk lore claims that it was due to slurring of an unused acronym, 'GP' for 'General Purpose', a more likely part of the jeep name came from the fact that the vehicle made quite an impression on soldiers at the time, so much so that they informally named it after Eugene the Jeep, a character in the Thimble Theatre comic strip and cartoons created by E. C. Segar as early as mid-March 1936. Eugene the Jeep was Popeye's 'jungle pet' and was 'small, able to move between dimensions and could solve seemingly impossible problems'. In early 1941, Willys-Overland staged a press event in Washington, DC, having the car demonstrate its prowess by driving up the Capitol steps. Irving 'Red' Hausmann, a test driver on the Willys development team who had accompanied the car for its testing at Camp Holabird, had heard soldiers there referring to it as a jeep. He was enlisted to go to the event and give a demonstration ride to a group of dignitaries, including Katherine Hillyer, a reporter for the *Washington Daily News*. When asked by the reporter, Hausmann said, "It's a Jeep." Hillyer's article appeared in the newspaper on Feb. 20, 1941, with a photo showing a jeep going up the Capitol steps and a caption including the term "jeep". This is believed to be the most likely origin of the term being fixed in public awareness. Even though Hausmann did not create or invent the word 'Jeep', he very well could be the one most responsible for its first news media usage.

Thanks to Tom Stevens from the 'Hellcat News' (12th Armored Division Association newsletter) November, 2017 edition



Wyllis 'Jeep' – 1943

Below is the **8th Armored Division Tour of the Battlefields in the tracks of the 'Thundering Herd'** as proposed by military historian – Sam Doss who spoke at the June, 2017 Reunion.

Please take a look at the proposed tour, and contacted me if you are interested. I will forward your interest to Sam Doss.



8th Armored Division Association “Thundering Herd” WW II Battlefields Tour 2018

7-day/6-overnight Battlefield Staff Ride Itinerary

(11) 12-18 August 2018 (DRAFT ONLY, as of 16 NOV)

The itinerary is a guide and a point of departure, not a precise movement table.

<u>Event</u>	<u>Approx. Time</u>
<u>Prior to Departure (SAT, 11 AUG):</u> Depart	
Depart US. Overnight flights. (Your flight costs are not included,)	
<u>Day One (SUN, 12 AUG):</u> Arrival in Europe. Luxembourg City.	<u>Arrive Depart</u>
Morning arrivals at LUX (Luxembourg Internatinal Airport).	TBD TBD
Departure from LUX Arrivals area.	TBD TBD
Visit the German WW II cemetery (left) at Sandweiler.	

Visit the American Battle Monuments Commission Cemetery at Hamm: extensive tour includes GEN Patton's grave.



Lunch (OOP = out of pocket) TBD

Check into three or four-star hotel in Luxembourg City (hotel TBD).

Optional walking tour of the city.

Welcome dinner (included).

Overnight (first of two) in Luxembourg City

Day Two (MON, 13 AUG): 8th AD in the Saar-Moselle.

Arrive Depart

Breakfast (included), at hotel.

0700 0820

Do NOT check out of hotel. Load bus. Depart. (Note late departure.)
0930

0920



8th AD in the Saar-Moselle Triangle: Nenning, Berg, Sinz.

1015 1600

Lunch (included) at TBD.
TBD

TBD

Travel to Luxembourg City.

1600

1730(-)

Last overnight in Luxembourg City.

Day Three (TU, 14 AUG): Bastogne, Battle of the Bulge.

Arrive Depart

Breakfast (included), at hotel.

0700 0820

Check out of hotel. Load bus. Depart.

0820 0830



Travel to Bastogne. Follow route of LTC Creighton

Abram's 37th Tank Bn. Visit the Mardasson Memorial.

(Left: LT Charles Boggess' Sherman tank)

Easy Co., 506th PIR in the Bois Jacques.

TF DeSobry battles 2. *Panzerdivision*.

Lunch (included) at the Hotel Melba, Basotogne. 1300 1415+

Heintz Barracks (museum, entry incl.), BG McAuliffe's HQ.

1430 1600

Resupply by air, Bastogne perimeter



Hemroulle: 101st Airborne and attached units defending the Bastogne perimeter.

Check into the four-star Hotel Melba in downtown Bastogne.

Dinner (OOP) in downtown Bastogne.

Day Four WED, 15 AUG): North Shoulder, Battle of the Bulge.

Arrive Depart

Breakfast (included), at hotel.

0700 0820

Check out of hotel. Load bus. Depart.

0820 0830

Travel to Losheimergraben. 12. *Volksgrenadier Division*, 6. *Panzerarmee* attacks

1000 1300



99th ID. 277. *Volksgrenadier Division* attacks through the Krinkelt Forest.

Follow the route of Kampfgruppe Peiper.



Lunch (incl.) at the Butgenbacher Hof, Butgenbach.

1300 1430

1st ID „Big Red One“ at Dom Butgenbach. CPL Warner.

1440 1500

Malmedy Massacre site and museum (included).

1520 1630

Check into Butgenbacher Hof. Dinner in Butgenbach (OOP). Overnight. 1650+

Day Five (TH, 16 AUG): Margraten Cemetery, 8th AD Roer to the Rhein **Arrive Depart**

Breakfast (included), at hotel. 0700 0820

Check out of hotel. Load bus. Depart. 0820 0830

Travel to **Margraten, Holland**. Visit ABMC Cemetery, Netherlands. 0930 1100

(Many 8th AD soldiers are buried here.) Wreath laying. 8th AD monument.



Depart for Roermond area. Lunch. 1200 or TBD

8th AD in Operation Grenade & related battles: Heide Woods, Roer River crossings. 1330 1700



Roer to the Rhein: Merbeck, Tetelrath, Grefrath, “Werewolves,” Rheinberg and the Fossa Canal, Spellem (first town east of the Rhein captured by Ninth Army),

battles v. *116. Panzerdivision* vic. Zweckel. Other locations TBD.

Check into hotel at location TBD.

Day Six (FR, 17 AUG): Rhein River Valley and Remagen Bridge **Arrive Depart**

Breakfast (included), at hotel. 0700 0820

Check out of hotel. Load bus. Depart. 0820 0830

(Passengers requiring transportation to

Duesseldorf and Frankfurt airports will be taken to the Rheinberg train station.)

Drive down the Rhein River between Bonn and Koblenz.

9th Armored Division and the capture of the Remagen Bridge.

Lunch (OOP) in Remagen.

Continue down the Rhein Valley.

Drive to Luxembourg Airport. Check into a hotel in the vicinity of the airport.

Dinner (OOP).

Last overnight in Europe.

Day Seven (SAT, 18 AUG): Departure for States or other parts of Europe **Arrive** **Depart**

Breakfast (included), at hotel. 0700 0820

Transfer to LUX and other European airports as required. TBD TBD

Judd H. Alexander Collection - 58th Armored Infantry
Battalion, 8th Armored Division - Oral History Project

Collection Information

[VIEW DIGITIZED COLLECTION](#)

Type of Resource:

Video: DVD [1 item] --Oral history interview

Interviewer:

[Jon Kirst](#)

Contributor:

[Barbara Hatch](#)

Contributor Affiliation/Organization:

[Cactus Shadow High School](#)

Collection #:

AFC/2001/001/47570

Subjects:

Alexander, Judd H.

World War, 1939-1945--Personal Narratives

United States. Army.

Cite as:

Judd H. Alexander Collection



Pfc. W. R. King. S/Sgt. King.

Pfc. William King is killed in action

Pfc. William R. King, the youngest of three sons of Mr. and Mrs. B. H. King, Seward, in service, was killed in action in Germany March 31, 1945. He was in the headquarters company, 80th tank battalion, of the Eighth armored division connected with the Ninth army. At the time he entered the army in December, 1943, he was a member of the senior class of **Cpl. G. H. King.** Seward high school and returned in uniform for his graduation. Overseas since November, 1944, he was on reconnaissance duty in England, France and Holland and in combat in Germany. Besides his parents and two brothers in service, a brother, Carl, and sister, Alice, are at home.



William King, 80th Tank Battalion KIA in Germany on March 31, 1945