



50th Golden Anniversary Issue 1995

Rainbow Celebrates 50th Anniversary Still Shines Over Europe

Nearly 200 Rainbow veterans, their families and friends were privileged to represent Rainbow on the 50th Anniversary of VE-Day, the End of World War II in Europe. The experience was so compelling to all who attended, that there was nearly universal agreement that we should raise the funds from those who participated to record this singular event as part of the history of the Rainbow Association and its Foundation.

There were members who had been back on numerous occasions to Germany, Austria, and France, who thought they knew what to expect; there were those who had never been back and were uncertain what to expect; there were those who came with reservations about what might transpire, some who had their own agenda; there were dedicated wives and children of Rainbowners who truly wanted to learn more of the history of their fathers' experiences, and even members from other Divisions, the 20th Armored, 70th & 36th, who found the organization of this return attractive from their own points of view. Whatever they expected, and whatever their reaction to what transpired, there was universal praise for our good comrade Wolfgang Robinow, for the meticulous, well organized, and surprise-laden events for the Munich/Dachau/KZ - Dachau/Salzburg program. If there were no other reason but to pay tribute to Robinow/Snapp/Snuffin/Koenig/Twiss and all their buddies from the I&R Platoon of the 242nd, we all felt it was reason enough to record these events. What follows is the result of the best judgment of President McGovern, Chairman Eberhart of the Foundation, and myself to describe this unique experience of Rainbow as it transpired. Ted.

How It All Began

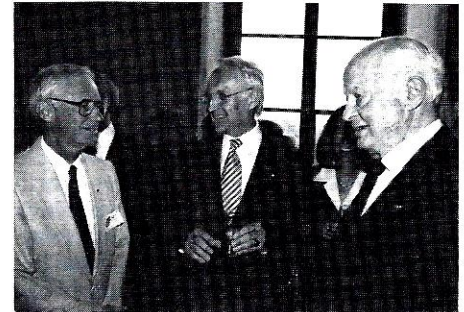
Wolfgang Robinow who came to the U.S. as a teenager to escape the danger of Nazi persecution was inducted into the United States Army and ended up

in combat with the Rainbow Division. Because of his German proficiency and intelligence training, he was appointed to the I&R Platoon of the 242nd Infantry and among his laurels was the advance reconnaissance into Munich where he picked up the phone, called the Rathaus and demanded and received the surrender of the City of Munich. It is widely known that several Divisions were involved in the capture of Munich, but Robinow and his jeep of I&R men are widely recognized by the Germans for their unique role in the capitulation of the town.

Robinow was associated here and in Germany with major industries and ultimately returned to Germany where he lives in Munich today. At our Salt Lake Reunion, he and his men made a bid for the Annual Reunion to be held in Munich. President Fagiolo appointed a committee to consider the feasibility of a 50th Anniversary Return to Europe, and such a plan was approved at the Midyear and the rest is history. The result was a series of events in those cities that exceeded any of the publicity that preceded it, and Robinow provided those who returned with "the most unique experiences since combat itself." The arrangements were so well prepared, that each new event seemed to be better than the last and the composite of all of them left most of us in awe and deep gratitude. The tour that followed through Austria, German combat sites, and the four days in Alsace-Lorraine provided by Veterans Travel & Tour, added a grand finale to this most remarkable and oft-times nostalgic 50-Year Anniversary trip.

Because part of the visit included a Reception by the City of Dachau and our return to the KZ-Dachau Camp for the former prisoner 50th Anniversary Liberation Memorial, we cooperated closely with the International Comité of Dachau through Arthur Haulot, our good friend and V.P. of the Committee, and KZ Dachau Museum Director Barbara Distel, also Rainbow's long-

Munich



President John McGovern and Wolfgang Robinow chat with Dr. Edmund Stoiber, Prime Minister of Bavaria.



Reception in Munich



Munich honors Rainbow — celebrates 50 years since Nazism defeat.



Free beer and dinner for all — Wolf and Norm lead a toast at the Hofbrauhaus.

time friend, to ensure that our being guests of the Bavarian Government would not be offensive to them. We were encouraged to proceed. We were requested by numerous high schools to have those men who liberated the camp

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KZ Dachau Concentration Camp

speak to their classes that are studying the history of the Nazi era, World War II and the Holocaust and particularly the Dachau Concentration Camp. That we were received with incredible gratitude and affection by the former inmates of the Camp goes without saying. What surprised many of us was the genuine expression of deep gratitude on the part of the German and Austrian officials, the teachers and students, and the people themselves for what America had done for their country in liberating them from a recognized terrible evil that their forefathers had fallen prey to and for letting them be a part of the staunch defense of democracy in the 50 years since.

The return to Alsace and Rainbow's reception there completed the circle. The love and respect the people of France still hold for Rainbow was never more evident.

Remarks: Dr. Daniel Fischer. At Dachau Castle April 28, 1995

I feel honored that I am among you, and after all this time I can say thank you to my liberators. Make no mistake about it, it's not the first time that I said it, but perhaps it's the first time to you, the liberators.

You have gone through hell, fifty years ago, to fight your way to Dachau, only to find something that was worse than hell. We were those barely living creatures of that hell. And for those of us who were still alive, you came just in the nick of time.

But how can I thank you for fifty years of life — a whole lifetime — for giving me the chance to grow to adulthood, to have a wife and children, to have a career in medicine, to be an American. And I want to thank you for someone else — for my mother — because you proved her right once more, unfortunately for the last time. . . .

My mother was 39, my father 49, his mother — my grandmother — 75 and my brother was 13 when we arrived to Auschwitz on that day at the end of May in 1944. My mother helped her mother-in-law get in line with the women. I was 15 years old as we stood there in line with my father and brother.

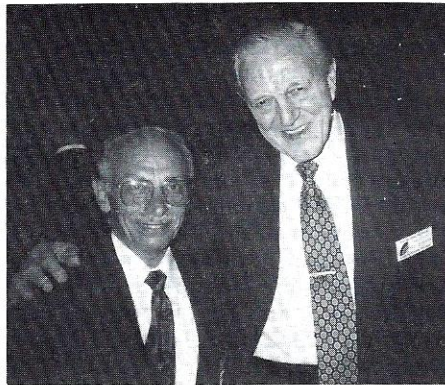
Parenthetically, I must tell you that my father's brother went to medical school in Paris, and on his visits home over the years, he became my role model, and when I was 13, I announced that I, too, wanted to be a doctor just like my uncle, and it was understood that this would be so.

As we stood in line, my mother left

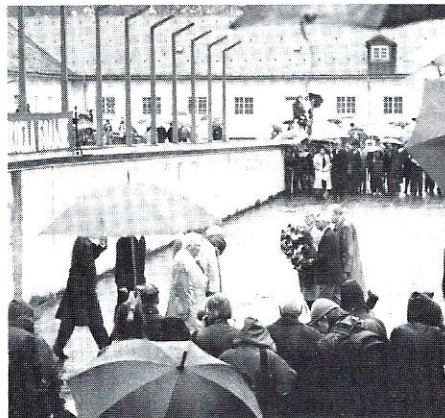
her place and walked to us, stopped in front of me, clasped my face in her hands and said, "You are going to survive this, you be a doctor."

In retrospect, I believe, my mother understood, then and there, the horrible reality of our fate, the inevitable end of her entire family, and in spite of that, found the strength and dignity to look to the future.

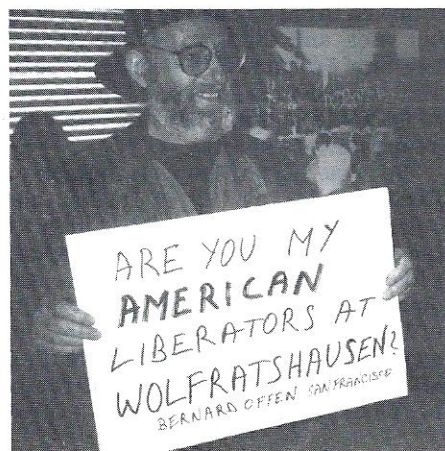
I thank you for giving my mother and some other mothers a future.



Dr. Daniel Fischer, liberated at Dachau, pays the ultimate tribute to America and Rainbow.



Rainbow officers lay 2nd wreath (after Comite Dachau), rain fell; tears from heaven.



The Dachau Plaque



Rainbow's wreath at Dachau



At the Memorial Service in the City of Dachau for those inmates and those who sheltered them who were executed by the S.S. in the town just before the Liberation.



Rainbow is received in City of Dachau — Mr. Richardi's exhibit of Rainbow in WWII and the Liberation of Dachau.

Visits To The Schools

Wolfgang was asked to arrange visits to several schools where the youngsters were deeply interested in WWII and the Dachau Concentration Camp. They wanted to know what we felt as young men in WWII and how the scene at Dachau was and how it affected us. As word spread, there were more schools than we could accommodate, but in teams of 2 or 3 men, each with one man who had been in the Camp, we visited several schools in Munich, Dachau, and Furstenfeldbruck. Every team had the same reaction — the young people of Germany were eager to learn all they could, had already come to grips with what happened, and were dedicated to ensure it not be forgotten. Indeed, some of us felt they are better informed about the evil of WWII and how it was defeated, than our youngsters are being taught. In letters they have sent us since, they expressed their gratitude, cited special stories they heard and loved, and said they were surprised how easy we were to talk with, unlike older generations there — and especially our ladies. Those speaking to the schools included McGovern, Simonson, Koenig, Bender, Donahue, Butt, Dorris, Griffith, Keithan, Kenny, Martinson, Shurtleff, Warren, Tisch, Robinow, Johnson and Eberhart.

In every visitation, we gave copies of "Our American Heritage." This included documents of the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, the Monroe Doctrine, the Gettysburg Address, and others. It was a handsome velveteen binder with parchment-like pages of those documents. In one of the schools, as Ted Johnson explained the gift we were leaving with them, he mentioned that it included Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. He got carried away and recited it from memory and received a resounding ovation from the students who obviously recognized its meaning.

One of the original requests to visit a class came from:

Anna Andlauer, Furstenfeldbruck Teacher, whose class had corresponded with Jim Dorris and Wolfgang. "It's a great honour for me to receive a letter from you. It's really great that you not only liberated Dachau but that you also feel a special responsibility to keep telling this story today for the generations to come. I can feel your feeling of responsibility and enthusiasm in the way you prepare this 50th Anniversary.

"As a guide in the memorial site of Dachau, I've been standing many times in front of your plaque in memory of the liberation of this camp by the 42nd Rainbow Division. Then, I've always retold what Rainbow veterans told me

on May 3, 1992, at the Holzle-Haus after the celebrations. [The year we dedicated the Plaque.] I remember two Americans, one telling me about his first impressions while entering the camp. 'There were thousands of arms who tried to touch us and wanted to greet us, and I suddenly thought these were the arms of skeletons.'

"This event had an important impact on me because it was the first time that I met one of the liberators.

"Among the texts you sent me, I find the one on 'What did they know and when did they know it?' especially interesting. That's the question I always ask when I talk to people older than I. Who answers the questions in this book? Who had these impressions of Dachau on April 29th? . . .

"My students and I are looking forward to your visit to Dachau. Dietrich Mittler told us of your severe losses before you arrived in Dachau and that you here really experienced what you were fighting for . . .

"People in Germany are very aware of the 50th Anniversary of the liberation right now and there is a lot to do to really make use of this chance . . . Therefore, I've got so many questions.

"Yours in a Common Cause, Anna Andlauer, Furstenfeldbruck Teacher"



Students in Munich listen attentively and then question the Rainbow about WWII. A copy of *Mein Kampf* "liberated" in Munich was very impressive.

Salzburg



Rainbow honors General Harry Collins at his grave in Salzburg. Morton Barnard, who was in Rainbow at its reactivation, gives the eulogy. After Taps, Rainbow sang "There's a Rainbow in the Army," which the General hoped we would sing at every Reunion.



Australia—Still as beautiful as it was in the wondrous days of 1945.

Rainbow Fiftieth

Rain today, all morning long,
Sunday morning in Dachau the camp,
April thirtieth, 1995.

Steadily it came down upon us all,
Speakers, listeners, wreath-bearers,
Come to honor those who remain steadfast.

There, as ceremonies were ending
We stood, umbrellas dripping,
In a circle, around the courtyard of the camp
where they once walked or fell where they
were walking.
Remembering.

The 42nd, who took this death camp had
returned.

Then, as we went out, passing through the gates
the rain stopped, as we went on.
It was as though the tears of the departed were
being shed upon us,
For us and all the future generations.

Do they, can they tell what lies ahead of us,
ahead of our grandchildren?
Will the grandchildren stand here, after another
fifty years have passed,
Remembering?

ELIZABETH SPENCER

Salzburg Letter from Hans Steurer

"Letter from Hans Steurer of Fiecht, Austria, who met the tour in Salzburg. Hans lost a forearm and an eye when he played with a mine detonator after the war.

"... In the meantime, I found one of my life savers from 1945. Here is a copy of the letter he wrote. He even knows the name of his jeep driver, but doesn't know where he lives now in the U.S. — several men helped in the search of my life savers: Capt. Richard L. Hoyt, Fayetteville, AR. I owe him so much for his gigantic job and effort he has done for me. I must praise him — he wrote more than 200 letters. I don't know whether Dr. Patrick Morone (my life saver) has got my letter, because I had got an incomplete address of him — without Parsippany — I owe 50 years of my life to three brave and charitable soldiers of the 42nd U.S. Army Division, and I was always gratefully remembering these facts. When there were the U.S. hostages in Tehran, I was fasting and praying for a safe release and I became a real friend of the U.S., but I was never in the U.S. I couldn't afford. As a disabled man, I have not achieved so much in our competitive elbow society — therefore, I must beg your pardon for my poor English! My friend Prof. Hans Stock is also a great friend of the U.S. and admirer of the U.S. heroes and their equipment. He is a historian and wants to make public in a book the heroism of the U.S. GI's in the liberation of our country."

We Find Old Battle Grounds

As iron filings are drawn together by a magnet, so are old soldiers drawn back to the well-remembered bloody battle fields of their wars. The worse the conditions were, the more insistent the call to return. Civil war veterans couldn't stay away, and their many monuments attest to their devotion to lost comrades. In 1930, WWI Rainbow men returned to Chalons near the terrible Champagne battlefield as the chosen place for their annual Reunion. Some went back to France again and again, even as recently as the late 1980's. For those in WWII, 50th Anniversary ceremonies in Europe provided the incentive for Rainbowners to seek out old battlefields, fox holes, pill boxes, and friends of long ago.

Schweinfurt Woods

Five buddies from I-Co. 242, Tom Dillingham, Joe Dorsey, Dee Eberhart, Bill Shurtleff and Ted Simonson followed their own compass course and shared memories on such a pilgrimage.

Theirs was a journey back in time to a small, haunted patch of woods where they had miraculously survived unrelenting day-long artillery, mortar, 20mm, and machine gun fire, as the luck of other comrades ran out. I-Co.-242 had been attached to Task Force A, 12th Armored Division for a long distance sweep behind Schweinfurt to block escape routes. On April 10, 1945, near the village of Unterspiesheim, 10 kilometers south of and across the Main River from Schweinfurt, the Task Force halted in the dark and troops buttoned up or dug in. At dawn on April 11, on-target enemy shelling began. I-Co., less its mortars and one squad detached to guard the tanks, was ordered forward, past the dead (including two of its own brand new replacements), the terribly wounded, and smoldering, knocked out tanks with the dead, both inside and partly out, across a clearing and into a finger of woods. It was there that the nightmare began in earnest and lasted until dusk. I-Co. had been ordered into what quickly became a fire storm laid down by German anti-aircraft guns supported by infantry. The guns ranged from 20mm through versatile 88's, and ended with those of 128mm size, effective at very high or very low altitudes. Because of a water table less than a foot below the surface, no foxholes were dug. Except for the medics who soon became casualties, almost everyone stayed prone throughout the day as crisscrossing machine gun tracers added their own colorful distraction to the multi-colored air, tree and ground bursts.

One officer remained unwounded. Shortly before dark he led the survivors, helping the wounded back to the tanks, leaving a four-man rear guard. After the war he wrote that only about 20% of the company emerged unscathed, physically, at the end of the day. There were cases of shell shock (not battle fatigue) so bad that the men never returned to the company, and in one such case the survivor died prematurely a few years after he was discharged. Forward observer Jim Dunham, later RDVA Chaplain, saved what was left of the day. After having come forward early in the day with a tommy gun to help, he had been ordered back by the Company Executive Officer to find artillery support. Finally, as darkness closed in, Lt. Dunham was able to patch through to Corps artillery, spotted smoke, and called for a barrage which blew up the enemy ammunition dump. The leader of the detached squad guarding the tanks remarked many years later that for the entire day it appeared to him as if the woods in which the company was trapped were on fire. He was amazed that anyone emerged alive.

Fifty years later five aged veterans returned to that place of exceptional courage by many, and endurance stretched to the limit by most. The small woods have been abandoned. Brambles, vines, undergrowth and small second growth trees are the remaining memorial of those bitter woods. This is in stark contrast to nearby, well-managed forests which are park-like in appearance with many large old trees. One can only conclude that shrapnel and unexploded shells have discouraged the local wood cutters.

For the five who returned, the chapter is finished, the book is closed, and the ghosts now rest.



Dr. Josef Dechant, Burgermeister of Salzburg and the Acting Madam Ambassador, hosted Rainbow in Salzburg for the General Collins ceremony and the lunch that followed at Schloss Aigen.



Schweinfurt Woods, north of Unterspiesheim (May 4, 1995) Co.-I-242 MLR survivors (April, 1995), Ted Simonson, Dee Eberhart, Joe Dorsey, Tom Dillingham, Bill Shurtleff.



The Wurzburg Castle has been rebuilt almost as it was before the war.

Wurzburg

Everyone who was there recognized the Marienberg Castle — those Artillery men who set up so effectively up on the hill and supported the Infantry block by block through that town, those of the 222nd who crossed in boats to establish a bridgehead, and all who looked back to see "Heil Hitler" on the walls of the castle the first morning, and at the light of dawn the second day, saw the "42nd Rainbow Infantry Division" painted over it. A book published there on the 50th Anniversary of the bombing that might have been second only to Dresden showed the total damage to the heart of the city, reminding those veterans who were there of the rubble-filled streets and parks they fought through. Ed Suchar of the 222nd and Bob Moore of the 232nd searched to identify where Ed had knocked out a tank and where Bob remembers seeing one burn. Ted Johnson identified the building on the intersection where an American tank had been blown up and his mortar squad supporting E Co. 232nd met a counterattacking German force in the middle of the street as they both moved forward at that intersection. There was no reception in Wurzburg.

Rainbow Dedicates Plaque at Kilstett

This plaque, dedicated on May 6, 1995, was proposed and financed by the men of H Co./232d Inf. It was erected in the town of Kilstett, France, where many of our men, wives and children have always been welcomed. Here, several units of the 232d, as well as other Rainbow units, faced and held off an overwhelming force during "Operation Nordwind." The plaque reads "January 1945 — In grateful memory of those American 7th Army soldiers and their French comrades who fell defending freedom during the 'Nordwind Attack' — Hitler's last great offensive. Dedicated by the 42d Rainbow Division, this 50th Anniversary year — in honor of 'Task Force Linden' May 1995." The plaque is affixed on a Maginot Line bunker which is now part of a lovely city park.

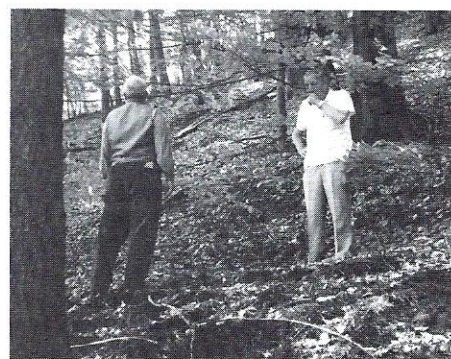
The Division was welcomed by Mayor Hommel and by the proprietor of the La Courronne Hotel, Paul Herrmann. Paul assisted us in gaining approval from the city. A ceremony was held at their monument to the war dead. Later, we had lunch and wine at the city hall. Several veterans stayed at the hotel and were guests for wine and weinerschnitzel. There followed a songfest, and the proprietor presented each family with a bottle of schnapps which had the Rainbow emblem and date of anniversary embossed on it.



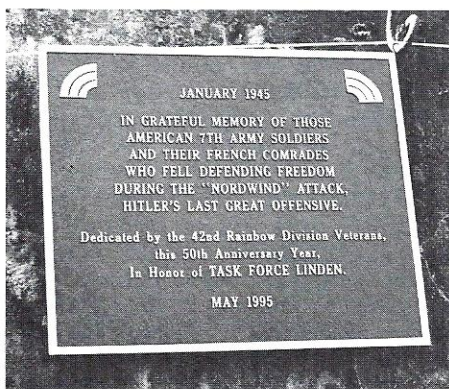
The view from the top in Kilstett Park.

In the Vosges Mountains

We were on the line along the Rothback River where the stream and a little highway ran between the Rainbow and the enemy lines in the area where we relieved the 45th Division when we came back to the Vosges as a full Division. A hike along that front, which remains almost exactly as we left it on the morning of the kickoff on March 15, shows the sunken remains of our dugouts and foxholes and even some barbed wire. Bob Moore found his foxhole position up on the hill where the dividing line with the 103rd was his area of coverage for a 50-caliber machine gun, and Mayland Crosson made the hike to identify the area she had heard about from her husband Tom. An expedition to excavate those old foxholes would find remnants of every unessential piece of equipment and personal effects that we left behind as those daunting hills demanded that we carry all the ammo and hand grenades and rations possible. A stop by some at the Wenk Hotel in Wingen revealed our National Artillery Plaque prominently displayed on the wall of the bierstube. Wimmenau and the Lichtenberg Castle were stops as well. The Siegfried Line was all but obliterated, but Pettus and Usher found their position along the Saarbach River at Ludwigswinkel where they provided a decoy to attract enemy fire, which they did in spades.



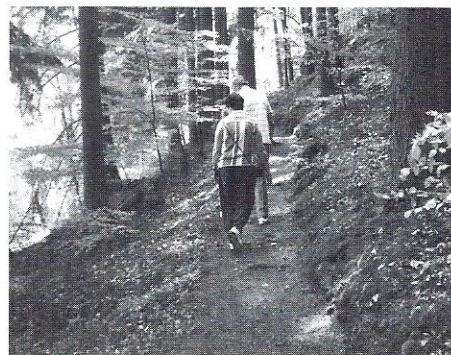
232nd men locate their positions on the hillside over the Rothback River between Rothback and Reipertswiller.



The Kilstett Plaque mounted on the Maginot Line Bunker in front of Kilstett toward Gamsheim.



The Paul Herrmann Family, owners of the la Courronne Hotel in Kilstett, which was the Task Force headquarters in January, 1945 — and Paul was a child of 7 or 8 when we were there.



Front lines on the Rothback just the way we left it.

VE Day, May 8th — 50 Years Later

Once more the men of the 242nd honored their fallen comrades at the Hatten Memorial, located across the road and near one of the many Maginot Line pillboxes. The picture on the right shows all the veterans of Rainbow who had gathered for the wreath-laying ceremony, prior to a Memorial Service and Reception by the Mayor. On the way back to Offendorf for the final V-E Day celebration, we saw the landing site where Himmler's Army crossed the Rhine, and Richard L. Brown clearly identified the spot in one of those little towns where they called fire on a convoy of the enemy and destroyed it when they hit an ammo truck that exploded.

Return to Offendorf

A royal welcome awaited Rainbow at the town of Offendorf near Gamsheim. There were church services, a memorial service at their monument for the many citizens, including children, who were lost in the war, followed by a reception at City Hall. Finally, a huge banquet, a band that kept us all singing until the wee hours, good wine, and great food. At each table were townspeople who spoke English well, including many gracious young people of the town who were our hosts and hostesses.

A highlight of the day was the designation of President John McGovern and Roy Bird as Honorary Citizens. The admiration that these French Alsations had for the Americans, who they have not forgotten, was evident everywhere. In all our presentations in France, we were able to respond to their receptions by acknowledging that the Marquis de Lafayette had come to our aid when we were fighting for our independence; that the Rainbowers of World War I had fought valiantly under General Henri Gouraud where they helped blunt the last German Offensive of World War I; and we of World War II had come to help them withstand the Last Offensive of Adolf Hitler in World War II. We crowned it by giving a gift of a gorgeous beer stein emblazoned with the pictures of the American symbol of Freedom, the bald eagle, and with the inscription thereon of the first words of America the Beautiful, "Oh Beautiful for Spacious Skies." Beginning in Austria, as we presented it, we sang that song in closing our response.

As it drew to a close, many felt this could not have been a better finale for that nostalgic, heart-warming tour, and all were grateful for the wonderful events that Lise Pommois arranged for Rainbow there. A cruise on the Rhine

River and a night in Rudesheim brought the 50th Anniversary to an end.

All could leave with the sincere feeling that Rainbow could not have been more warmly received.

John McGovern Speaks

"Your Honor, Mayor Hommel, citizens of Offendorf, veterans of the 36th Div., and fellow Rainbow veterans and friends:

When my Company "B" of the 232nd Infantry Rainbow Division entered Offendorf on Christmas Eve of '44, we were mostly young men, not long out of school, with no combat experience. We relieved the veterans from the 36th Division. We had little or no ammunition, and they shared their supplies with us. They were slightly amused by our total lack of experience, but were helpful with advice about the current military situation. They said things like "try to stay alert in your foxholes, the Germans like to sneak up and roll grenades into them!"

We saw very few of the people of Offendorf that first night, but the next day I went to the Christmas Day Mass at the church in Offendorf. We tried to stand in the rear of the church because we had to carry our weapons with us, but the people in the church, mostly ladies, insisted that we go to the center of the church. The Mass was still in Latin, so the service was much like those at home. However, when the pastor gave the sermon, he spoke in English, then in French, and finally finished in German! Perhaps someone here was at that Mass?

We left the church with our hearts warmed by the very pleasant reception of the people of Offendorf.

A few days later, we were in Gamsheim for New Year's Eve, and then went to Stattmatten and Sessenheim, where, in the next two weeks, most of our company were casualties.

We were very grateful for the kind reception we received in Offendorf and the rest of Alsace. Even though our presence meant that the enemy was not far away, and their homes and lives were endangered, we were welcomed and aided by the people in this area. We regret that we were not able to prevent the enemy from crossing the Rhine on the morning of January 5. As a result, the town was reoccupied and the population transferred to Germany, where they suffered many hardships. When they returned in late April 1945, this beautiful area was devastated and many innocents had died. We are sorry that we could not spare you this tragedy.

There were 28 men from Co. "B" killed in action, most of them in Alsace. The rest of the Rainbow Division lost hundreds of men in this

area. For us, this area is hallowed ground, and we are grateful that it is populated by the people that were so kind to us fifty years ago. We thank you for your commemoration of our time in Offendorf and promise to keep you always in our thoughts and prayers.

Mr. Mayor, please allow me to present the flag of the United States of America as a token of our love and respect."



Rainbow gives Mayor Fenninger of Hatten its gift of the "America The Beautiful" mug. Mme. Lise Pommois looks on.



Rainbowers after wreath laying and speeches at Hatten Monument.

Benefactors

The following returnees contributed to the total cost of publishing this issue of the *REVEILLE*. Our thanks to them, and to Ken Carpenter who edited this, Hugo Grimm, who published it, and Chairman Klinedinst who approved it:

Robinows, Umbachs, Crosson, Shurtleff, Eberhart/Manclark, Stofts, Bensons, Pettus, Eberharts, Tweeds, Van Gilts, Bender, Franklins, Walkers, Banks, Palmeris, Bakers, Lukens, Bachman S.T., Knetzger, Snowden, Snapps, Margols, Richardsons, R.E. Snapps, Dorseys, May, S. Johnson, Gardners, C. Johnsons, Suchar, Strassburg, T. Johnsons, Richard Brown.

ED. NOTE: Although he would be the first to disclaim any credit, we all owe a debt of gratitude to PNP Ted Johnson for outstanding ingenuity and perseverance. He stayed the course!

How It Seemed To Us

Letters to Wolfgang Robinow and to us in the Foundation can give you some insight into everyone's reaction. I wish we could reproduce them all, but space won't allow it. They will be a part of the permanent Archives, along with the many newspaper, television, and photographic accumulations from this Anniversary visit. Here are just a few typical comments:

"Thanks for all you did to help make our trip to Europe for the 50th Anniversary of Victory in Europe one of the most wonderful times of our lives. We feel like we made so many new friends on this trip that we will treasure the friendship for a lifetime. Our thoughts have been with the two guys we left in Germany and France in the hospital."

"Our trip to Germany and Austria is a never-to-be-forgotten episode that moved me emotionally, more than most of our life's experiences. I am so glad that I was able to go and participate in the Dachau activities and the ceremony at General Collins' grave."

"... I have to say Wolfgang and you pulled off a trip none of us will forget. Back in February 1994, when I sat in the bar at Charleston with Lise, listening to you and Dee discuss the pros and cons of such an exercise, I had reservations about my desire to go to Munich and associate with those who allowed national socialism and Dachau to happen. Now I'm glad I joined in. The face-to-face meeting with those high school kids cleared my mind of doubts I've had. If the hundred or so kids I talked to are an indication of current German thinking, then the future of their country will be in good hands. I hope I'm right."

"I would be hard pressed to write a check large enough to really compensate for the fellowship and consideration shown to me on the recent VE-Day trip. I know that my life is better for meeting and gaining the friendship of so many fine people."

"When Carl and I signed on for this Veterans Tour, we never dreamed of anything so fantastic as this turned out to be. It was 100% all the way."

"I tried to join other tours which had been advertised in 1993 and 1994 but which were cancelled. ... In retrospect, it was fortunate because neither of them could have been as outstanding or meaningful as the 50th Anniversary ... An outstanding job representing the 42nd Veterans at all the events in France."

"It was truly a remarkable trip through Germany and Austria. It doesn't seem possible that 50 years have elapsed since an 18-year-old boy from Buffalo joined the battered veterans of

Co. L 232nd at Lichtenberg and then became one of them. So many memories — so many places — so many faces remembered — many no longer with us. ..."

"Thanks for ... the 50th Anniversary of Victory in Europe! One of the most wonderful times of our lives."

"You sent a list of the people to thank for all of the wonderful hospitality we received — you all need to be thanked, too!"

"The trip was magnificent — a journey down memory lane we'll never forget."

How It Seemed to a Rainbow Daughter

... Also enclosed is Bruce's and my check to be donated to the 50th Anniversary Fund. It is not enough of an expression of our gratitude for everything which Wolfgang, you and others did to make possible those two celebrated weeks in Germany and France. I came home with the feeling that I had time traveled in the company of the most wonderful guides ... not to imply that you and your buddies live in the past ... merely that great events in the history of the world become a palpable presence wherever you go and by being with you my eyes are opened to it. So, in the tradition you have established, let me speak for all of my generation who were able to attend these 50th Anniversary events ... the gracious cordiality and gentlemanly manner in which you addressed the officials and citizens at every formal occasion made us feel the pride which is "Rainbow." Whether your voices were raised in song or your glasses were raised in toast to your comrades and their hosts, we were moved by the passion and heartfelt sincerity which guides you ... and it is our privilege to have shared your company during these extraordinary days in Europe.

How It Seemed to a Son

... the trip of a lifetime which you veterans of the Rainbow made possible ... is exactly what this trip was, yet even this seems like a gross understatement of what this trip really meant to me. This trip was bigger than any one individual can contain within him or herself ... I felt an intense sense of honor, gratitude and pride in the contributions of all the men. This feeling of honor, that these great individuals would allow me to participate in their commemoration and never ending commitment to freedom, liberty, democracy and the pursuit of happiness is beyond words. You really had to be there to know what it was like, yet time and time again as I tell the story to friends and business associates

... they almost invariably volunteer a remark of how the story sends chills up their spines. How do you say thank you to those brave individuals in history who have worked at the cause to grant me my freedom? Jefferson wrote "Posterity, your generation will never know the price my generation paid for your freedom." If the trip did nothing else, it gave me a slight inkling of the price you and many others in history paid for my freedom. I got in touch with those who never came home. The trip brought home clearly that war is not only terrifying but very, very painful. It took the glamorous spin that the press and historians put on it, and brought into reality the fact that people pay for the price of war with their lives and their friends' lives. ...

If you have been exposed to war through education and never been to war, it is almost impossible to comprehend the travesty of war, but traveling with the men of the Rainbow allowed me to witness their feelings. As difficult as it was, there was a purpose served. I will never forget Lou Kramer's anecdote at Uhlwiler ... Nor will I forget our royal receptions in Germany and Austria. Or the humble warmth in the Alsace of La Hotel Couronne, a place where history made a turn for the better. I will always remember the tragedy at Hatten, the horror of Dachau, the 75 children lost at Offendorf and, of course, that spell-binding V-E Day evening with the generous, loving people of Offendorf.

Traveling with the men made me feel a great sense of pride and humility, the depth of which I have never experienced before. I have always noticed that there is something different about World War II veterans. For the most part, humble modesty best describes it. After the trip, I have to add that they possess a confidence in their ability to survive, an optimistic spirit and the sense of humor of 18-year-old boys. Yes, we saw the 18-year olds often throughout the trip. I was proud of the people of Europe for remembering your contribution. I was proud of the men of the Rainbow. I was proud of America. For once in these convoluted times, it was quite obvious that there once was a time when America did a magnanimous service for the world. Rest assured that there is one child of the Rainbow who will never forget the power of democracy, your contributions and your sacrifices. I am planning to attend the 75th Commemoration in 2020, and I hope you and your buddies will stick around to join me. If for some reason you and the boys are too busy to attend this trip, I have documented where the best hotels to stay are, where our friends are and where to lay each and every wreath. I extend to you all my profound respect, gratitude and love.

And Yet Another Veteran's View

I received a letter from Howard Margol, four pages long, urging it be published in this *REVEILLE*, so that all impressions were included. Howard approached the trip with "admitted mixed feelings." "Being Jewish I could never forgive the Germans for what they did to the Jews and to millions of other innocent people, but I decided to try to keep an open mind and be as objective as I possibly could."

Howard made the point that, while each of the middle aged Germans spoke to us as "liberators" from the Nazis, he noted that they didn't mention their former company's connection or their parents' connection with the Nazis. He felt that history was being rewritten. He felt the older Germans in the Hofbrauhaus "gave us a cold stare" but noted that he felt good when the young Germans stood as we walked by, smiled, and applauded.

The social highlight of the entire trip sponsored by the President of Bavaria made him feel that we were being treated like visiting royalty, and Dr. Stoiber's speech emphasized that he was born in 1941 which he took as meaning that he wanted us to know that he was not a Nazi, yet Howard asked why he didn't tell us what his forefathers did. He was disappointed that the Camp was a mere shadow of its former self, that it has been sanitized and beautified, and that the religious services and speeches were all in German except for President John McGovern's (perhaps he was not aware that booklets had been prepared in a dozen languages so that each group could read the speeches that were made in other languages).

In Austria, he acknowledged the welcome, but he noted the towns of Schweinfurt and Wurzburg didn't show anything but the bombings that had destroyed their cities. In closing, he noted that the message was always the same, "We liberated Germany from the Nazis," and he could believe that the young Germans may sincerely feel that way. He concluded by saying, "I personally cannot arrive at the same conclusion regarding the present Germans who grew up during Hitler's generation."

There certainly were many who had those same concerns before going over, and there were undoubtedly others who share Howard's reaction. There are many more who feel as I do that the Germans have come to terms with the evil of the Nazi past and are sincerely grateful for the manner in which America and its Western Allies treated them after World War II. That the environment there is one where the innate evil of mankind does not find a place to be nurtured and grow but rather has an

environment and educational emphasis that teaches them what it is they must never forget, is encouragement to me.

Our experiences in speaking to the young people in schools, and what seems genuine, sincere gratitude on the part of the Germans and Austrians that I spoke with, tells me that Germany may be doing a better job at teaching history than we do in many of our schools in the USA. Yet, in the sense of fairness, I felt it important to include Howard Margol's letter. I know many others who began with the same concern but found the reception sincere and still don't exonerate the evils of Nazism and those who willingly supported that evil. However, anyone who wants the full text of Howard's letter need only to drop me a line, and I will supply it.

TED

Conclusion

Wherever we went, whatever we did, and whoever we talked to, Rainbowers were careful not to claim that we were on this pilgrimage to aggrandize the Rainbow Division, but rather to support the history of all of World War II which produced so much evil and so much good. It was an opportunity for an individual Division to enhance the memory of what actually happened in World War II, to describe what we were fighting for, and what we fought against, and to define for a new generation the importance of the lessons of history. It was possible to do this because the Rainbow Division is as well organized, and has been so for going on almost 80 years, that they were in a position through the Association and its Foundation to attract the attention it did.

Over the years, there has been much

contention about who did or didn't liberate the camps, contribute the most to victories, have the most casualties, and so ad infinitum. We recognize that we were but a small part of a vast effort to rid the world of Fascism in all its forms. Ever since the men of World War I found the inspiration to face yet another battle when a rainbow appeared so often in the sky, ever since they came home and carried on the stated purpose of the Association to remember the men who fought and so many who died and the causes for which they fought, and ever since the first returning World War II Rainbower was welcomed to a meeting; that purpose has been carried on. Oh, to be sure, we meet to be with our old and new friends from those days, but if that were our only purpose, we would not be the singular voice in recording the history of all those wars that we have become. And to ensure that legacy survives, the World War I and II veterans have established the Rainbow Division Memorial Foundation to find a way to carry on that purpose after the last of the combatants are no longer here.

This trip was most encouraging in that regard, due to the number of children that came along, the young people that we met all over the continent and the recognition that was obvious among all the men, women, and children of those present generations. America does not stand alone in its cause of preserving Freedom in the world.

If the Association and the Foundation could claim nothing more, we shall have kept our pledge. Yet, there is still time to build on all those achievements so widely recognized today, and thereby ensure that they will not be forgotten but rather enhanced tomorrow.



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