



RAINBOW DIVISION
Veterans Memorial Foundation

REVEILLE

VOL. LXXXIV

APRIL 2004

NO. 4

Rainbow On-Line: www.rainbowvets.org

Chairman's Message

Something over 90 people enjoyed the mid-year reunion in Tucson so ably organized by our Reunions Officer James (Pete) Pettus. With the Board of Trustees meeting twice and the Constitution and By-Laws Committee meeting once, business was handled in an expeditious manner. The principal business addressed was the review of a series of recommendations for amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws adopted at the St. Louis national reunion in July 2003. Those recommendations had been reviewed by the entire Board of Trustees, and the individual members had provided the Chairman with their recommended actions prior to the meeting in Tucson. On Friday, all of these recommendations were considered by the Constitution and By-Laws Committee, which forwarded its recommendations to the Board for its first meeting on Saturday. After a solid three hours of discussion and voting, the Board adopted its recommendations to be placed before the membership for ratification at the annual July 2004 meeting in Memphis. These recommendations will be published in the *Rainbow Reveille* prior to the Memphis meeting.

At the second Trustees meeting there were other topics of discussion, but the primary one was a presentation by Trustee Bill Shurtleff regarding fund raising and long-range plans for guaranteeing the economic viability of our foundation. Bill and I will both be attending meetings of the Pacific Northwest and New Jersey Chapters in April and May with the goal of disseminating his message to a broad audience of Rainbowers. Other chapters who would like presentations made to them should contact Bill by phone (972-495-6039) or e-mail (wshurtleff@comcast.net) to see if he is available.

Also discussed was the possibility of entering a Rainbow Float in the Washington D.C. parade honoring the

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CAMPAIGNS

World War I: Lorraine-Champagne- Aisne-Marne- St. Mihiel-Meuse-Argonne.
World War II: Central Europe- Rhineland- Alsace-Ardenne.

MID-YEAR REUNION

Tucson, Arizona

The Mid-Year Reunion was held on February 13-15, 2004, in Tucson, Arizona at the Radisson Hotel City Center, under the auspices of Molly and Ted Dey of Armed Forces Reunion Inc. 92 Rainbowers were greeted by reunion chairman Pete and Rose Pettus. In addition to a modicum of business, many enjoyed the tours offered, which included the Arizona Desert Museum and the Pima Air Museum.

There were 92 Rainbowers at the Tucson reunion. The weather was a little cool for Arizona in February, but not unpleasant.

The Foundation Trustees met Friday to hear Bill Shurtleff and his grandson, Zack, present the need and options for fund raising.

Among the needs are scholarships, which Bill suggested to raising to \$1,000 per year for all scholarships, and he also suggested that we consider a Rainbow museum. He also wants to get all WWII members on tape and also to furnish computers for the secretary and treasurer to help them with their communications and record keeping.

Bill suggested making the fund raising appeals in the *Reveille* in order to reduce the mailing costs and allow us to have five appeals each year.

The Foundation business meeting on Friday had 19 agenda items, but most were disposed of quickly. Dee Eberhart reported on the minor changes that were made in the Constitution & By-Laws meeting on Thursday.

The Foundation agreed to fund the cost of printing 1,000 hardbound POW books that contain the stories of 115 Rainbowers who were German POW's. These should be available for the Memphis reunion.

The Foundation authorized \$1,000 for the construction of a Rainbow float at the Memorial Day parade in Washington, D.C., providing the additional \$4,000-\$5,000 needed is contributed by others.

THE STORY OF THE RAINBOW REVEILLE 1943-1945

*by Ex-Sgt. Robert F. Popp,
42nd Cav. Recon. Troop*

The World War II version of the *Rainbow Reveille* was published out of a most unpretentious office – the back end of a frame building originally constructed as an Army theater, but never used for that purpose.

The founding editor was Loye Minor, a small, dark-haired bespectacled fellow who, in civilian life, had worked at the New York Herald-Tribune. At the outset, he was the entire staff. The *Reveille*, printed in tabloid size, was issued once a week. It usually consisted of 10 or 12 pages. The *Rainbow* appeared in color across the top of Page One.

The actual typesetting and printing were done in the plant of the Muskogee Daily Phoenix, one of the newspapers in town. Minor went to town every Wednesday night to supervise the final page make-up and then, after the press run, hauled the bundles of newspaper to Camp Gruber. The bundles were delivered to each company size unit through the message center. Most outfits handled the distribution by tossing a copy on each GI's cot. There was no charge. A blank space was provided on the last page so the soldier could send it home. There was a widespread system of correspondents. Each outfit designated a man to report the happenings of his outfit. Page One summarized Division Headquarters' reports on status of training and explaining War Department directives, etc.

I remember the newspaper started publication before formal activation of the Division, when the total strength was only about 1,700 men. The major story on the activation included photos of World War I Rainbow veterans who attended and took part in the ceremony of passing the Division's flags to the new generation of Rainbowers.

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THE RAINBOW REVEILLE

Official Publication of the
RAINBOW Division Veterans
Memorial Foundation

Founder & Permanent Honorary President:
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REVEILLE CHAIRMAN: Herbert E. Klinedinst,
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Vol. LXXXIV April 2004 No. 4

THE RAINBOW REVEILLE

Published September, November, January, April
and June for/by members of the Rainbow Memorial
Foundation.

EDITOR RAINBOW REVEILLE:

Kenneth H. Carpenter, 116 Granada Lane,
Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32082. (904) 285-1163.

DEADLINE FOR COPY:

June Issue - May 1, 2004

SEND CHANGE OF ADDRESS TO: Publishing
Editor: Hugo E. Grimm, 32 Austin Hill Ct.,
Wentzville, MO 63385. (636) 327-5154.

SEND DUES' REMITTANCE SHEETS AND

DEATH NOTICES TO: Herb Butt, 16916 George
Franklyn Drive, Independence, MO 64055.

(816) 373-5041.

Subscription \$10.00

Chaplain's Message

God of our Fathers,

As we dedicate the World War II
Memorial, may it be a monument to the
soldiers of Rainbow Division and all oth-
ers in the military during that war. With
the help of loyal allies we successfully
defeated the dictatorial powers that
threatened the peace of the entire world.
Lord, give us the will and the means
today to put all tyrants and oppressors on
notice that any threat to peace will be
dealt with by us, even as in World War II.

We ask your protection on all our
troops in Iraq and Afghanistan who are
bringing peace and stability to the Mid-
dle East. Amen.

Norman P. Forde

Chap. (COL) USA ret.

RDVA Chaplain

In Memoriam

We are sad to report the passing of
PNAP Virginia Duhacsek in January
2004. Virginia's late husband, Walter,
served in the MP's and passed away in
1995. In September 1996, Virginia made a
tremendous donation of \$100,000 to the
Foundation. She also contributed her
house and acreage to the city of Sugar-
land, Texas for a park known as Duhacsek
Park. A staunch "Rainbower," Virginia
will be sorely missed.

Memorial File Corrections

In the November 2003 *Reveille*, Robert
L. Rooker was listed as "Unknown."
Robert served in Battery B, 392nd F.A.

David Savit was listed as "Deceased."
David was alive and in good health at this
time. We regret the errors and apologize
for them.

The Joy of Being an Editor

Getting out this paper is no picnic.
If we print jokes, people will say we are
silly.

If we don't, they say we are too serious.
If we clip things from other papers,
We are too lazy to write it ourselves.
If we don't, we are stuck on our own
stuff.

If we stick close to the job all day,
We ought to be out hunting news.
If we do go out and try to hustle,
We ought to be on the job in the office.
If we don't print contributions,
We don't appreciate true genius.
If we do, the paper is filled with junk.
If we make a change in a fella's write-up,
We are too critical; if we don't we are
asleep.

Now, likely as not, someone will say
We swiped this from some other paper.

WE DID!

(Courtesy 17th Airborne Division
Association)

We Get Letters

18 January 2004

Dear Sir,

My name is Frederick W. Coleman IV.
My father, Frederick W. Coleman III,
served in the 232nd Infantry Regiment as
chief of staff from the Camp Gruber days
through to the end of the war. At one
point he commanded "Task Force Cole-
man," which existed for a few days to lead
an attack. Could you help me contact men
who might have been a part of "Task
Force Coleman"? I would like to find out
more about that mission. Dad was a Lt.
Col. at the time. Thank you very much.

Fred Coleman

5025 Thatcher Rd.

Ojai, CA 93023

805-646-7738

e-mail: fcoleman@thatcher.org

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Dear Ken,

I received the newspaper article yester-
day from Anita Aries. This article
appeared in their newspaper about the
Rainbow Division. I thought you may be
interested in it.

Howard Parker

Sec./Treas. IA Chapt.

Q. What was the 1919 Rainbow Division?
I saw a picture of this marching group
and am wondering what it was.

A. The Rainbow Division was the nick-
name given to the 42nd Division, which
comprised National Guard units from 26
states and the District of Columbia. The
42nd was created in August 1917, and was
led by Col. Douglas MacArthur.

Chairman's Message

Continued from Page 1

completion of the WWII national
memorial. This is going to be a
huge celebratory parade, and we
ought to be a part of it. Under the
leadership of Jim Clemons, it
looks as though this will become a
reality. There's some fund raising
necessary. By the time you read
this, many of you will have heard
from me and others requesting
donations to support our entry in
the parade. Chapters and individ-
uals who would like to contribute
to the effort, should send their
donations (tax-deductible) to Treas-
urer Jon Janosik, 3389 Kingston
Lane, Youngstown, OH 44511. At
this writing, I already know of
three individuals who have donat-
ed \$500 each and three others of us
who have committed \$100 each.
That's \$1,800 of the minimum
\$5,000 needed. We're looking for
about 32 other \$100 donors. Can
you be one of them?

National Reunion
July 13-18, 2004
Memphis Marriott East
Memphis, Tennessee
(800) 627-3587 or (901) 362-6200

Room rates: \$79 plus tax (1 to 4 people), king bed or two double beds. Cut-off date 6/14/04.

The Memphis Marriott is located at 2625 Thousand Oaks Boulevard, Memphis, TN 38118. Please contact the hotel directly for accurate driving directions. The Marriott is located just minutes from the Memphis International Airport. For your shopping pleasure, three malls are five to 20 minutes away. Indoor and outdoor pools, a health club, sauna, whirlpool, and exercise room gives guests the perfect opportunity to relax. Valet and dry cleaning services, safety deposit boxes, in-room iron/ironing board, and morning complimentary coffee in the lobby are just a few of the services offered for hotel guests' convenience. Hotel parking is free and ample. Check-in time is 3:00 p.m. and check-out is 12:00 noon. Handicapped accessible and non-smoking rooms are also subject to availability. Please be sure to request these types of rooms when making your reservation. Blue Shoe Bar & Grill (American) open for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Corky's Bar-B-Que, nearby is open for lunch and dinner. Folks Folly,

a steakhouse nearby is open for dinner. P.F. Chang's China Bistro, a nearby Chinese restaurant, is open for lunch and dinner. Room service is available.

The Marriott provides complimentary shuttle service from the Memphis International Airport. Upon arrival at the airport, proceed to Baggage Claim. A phone is available in this area to call the hotel for pick-up. You may want to consider other transportation, as space is limited on complimentary services.

RV parking is allowed for guests of the hotel. There are no hook-ups on the premises. Graceland KOA Campground is approximately six miles from the Memphis Marriott. Please call 866-571-9236 for information, reservations and directions. Please make your reservations at least three months in advance.

Should you need to rent a wheelchair for the reunion, ScootAround rents both manual and power wheelchairs by the day and week. Please call their toll-free number at 888-441-7575 for details. All prices quoted include delivery fees.

Vendors, Schedules and Prices are subject to change.

New Jersey Chapter Reunion

The next New Jersey Reunion is scheduled for May 12-13-14, 2004 at beautiful Port-O-Call Hotel, Ocean City, N.J. Don't miss it! For more information, please call Harold Melinek at 908-604-9181.

The Story of the Rainbow Reveille

Continued from Page 1

I joined the staff a few weeks after publication began. Since I had been a newspaperman in civilian life, Minor was glad to have me in the office after duty hours to help with the writing and editing. I worked in the personnel office of special troops just next door to the newspaper office. My major accomplishment was to help bring award of the soldier's medal to a Rainbow soldier. I read, in a Tulsa paper, that a small boy had been saved from drowning, after he fell into a lake in that city. The newspaper said that a soldier leaped into the lake and saved the child's life.

I used the personnel office know-how to trace the soldier through the division locator system and confer with him that he, indeed, was the soldier who saved the boy's life. Publication of the story in the Reveille prompted Major General Harry Collins to award the soldier's medal to the man. The newspaper did a thoroughly professional job of covering Rainbow activities.

CUT HERE AND MAIL TO THE HOTEL

42nd RAINBOW FOUNDATION - HOTEL RESERVATION FORM

REUNION DATES July 13-18, 2004

NAME _____ SHARING ROOM W/ _____
 ADDRESS _____ ZIP _____
 TEL. NUMBER (____) _____ MARRIOTT HONORED GUEST CARD # _____
 ARRIVAL DATE _____ APPROX. TIME _____ DEPARTURE DATE _____
 # OF ROOMS _____ # OF PEOPLE IN RM. _____ HANDICAP ACCESS _____ SMOKING
 _____ NONSMOKING _____ KING BED _____ BEDS _____ If room type requested is not
 available, nearest room type will be assigned.

RATE: \$79+tax (currently 15.95%) for 1-2 people in room. Rate honored 3 days before/after official reunion dates, based on availability.

CUTOFF DATE: 6/11/04. After this date, reservations will be processed on space & rate availability.

CANCELLATION POLICY: Deposit is refundable if reservation is canceled by 6pm on your arrival day. All reservations must be guaranteed by credit card or first night's deposit enclosed.

___ AMEX ___ DINERS ___ VISA ___ MASTER CARD ___ CARTE BLANCHE ___ DISCOVER

CREDIT CARD NUMBER _____ EXP. DATE _____

SIGNATURE (regardless of payment method) _____

Mail to: Memphis Marriott, 2625 Thousand Oaks Boulevard, Memphis, TN 38118

ACTIVITY REGISTRATION FORM

(Tour times will appear in the June issue)

Listed below are all registration, tour, and meal costs for the reunion. Please enter how many people will be participating in each event and total the amount. Send that amount payable to ARMED FORCES REUNIONS, INC. in the form of check or money order (no credit cards or phone reservations accepted). Your cancelled check will serve as your confirmation. All registration forms and payments must be received by mail on or before June 11, 2004. After that date, reservations will be accepted on a space available basis. We suggest you make a copy of this form before mailing.

Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.
PO Box 11327
Norfolk, VA 23517
ATTN: 42nd Rainbow Foundation

OFFICE USE ONLY

Check # _____ Date Received _____
 Inputted _____ Nametag Completed _____

CUT-OFF DATE IS 6/11/04

	Price Per	# of People	Total
REGISTRATION FEE (Includes Luncheon and Banquet)	\$ 40		\$
CONTRIBUTION \$5 (Optional) for 3 nights free	\$ 5		\$
TOUR OPTIONS			
Wednesday Beale Street/Pink Palace Tour	\$ 42		\$
Thursday Memphis City Tour	\$ 26		\$
Thursday Casino Night	\$ 29		\$
Friday Graceland Tour	\$ 49		\$
Total Amount Payable to Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.			\$

Please do not staple or tape your payment to this form.

PLEASE PRINT

NAME (for nametags) _____

UNIT NAME FOR NAMETAG _____

SPOUSE NAME _____

GUEST NAMES _____

STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY, ST, ZIP _____ PH. NUMBER (____) _____ - _____

DO YOU HAVE ANY SPECIAL DISABILITY/DIETARY RESTRICTIONS? _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT _____ PH. NUMBER (____) _____ - _____

ARRIVAL DATE _____ DEPARTURE DATE _____

ARE YOU STAYING AT THE HOTEL? YES ___ NO ___ ARE YOU FLYING? ___ DRIVING? ___ RV? ___

For refunds and cancellations please refer to our policies outlined at the bottom of the reunion program. **CANCELLATIONS WILL ONLY BE TAKEN MONDAY-FRIDAY 9:00am-5:00pm EASTERN TIME (excluding holidays).** Call (757) 625-6401 to cancel reunion activities and obtain your cancellation code.

Medals, Miniatures, Ribbons, etc.

Your editor has often been asked where to procure a specific medal or ribbon at a reasonable price. We are pleased to certify Aegis Consulting Corp., P.O. Box 629, Bedford, PA 15522. Call toll-free 866-265-9063. e-mail: order@bedford.net. Pay by check, money order, Visa/MC. Make check out to Aegis Consulting Group. For orders under \$20, add \$4.50; \$20-\$40, add \$6; over \$40, add \$7.50. Following is the price list.

Tie Bars:

Specify CIB or Specific Branch \$5.00

Display Cases: 12 x 18 \$35.00
8 x 10. \$25.00

Badges: Anodized=shiny, oxidized=not shiny.

Combat Infantry Badge,
Full-Sized, Anodized \$6.50
Full-Sized, Oxidized \$6.50
Full-Sized w/Star \$6.50
Miniature Oxidized \$4.00
w/Star, Miniature Oxidized \$4.00

Combat Medic Badge,
Full-Sized, Anodized \$6.00
Full-Sized, Oxidized \$6.00
Miniature, Anodized \$5.00

Miniature Medals (Anodized, Oxidized)

American Campaign Medal \$5.00
American Defense Service Medal \$5.00
Air Medal \$5.00
Army Commendation Medal \$5.00
Bronze Star Medal \$5.00
Distinguished Service Army Medal \$12.00
Distinguished Service Cross \$6.25
Good Conduct Medal \$5.00
French Croix de Guerre \$20.00
European Theater Medal \$5.00
Korean War Service Medal \$5.00
Legion of Merit \$12.50
Prisoner of War Medal \$10.00
Soldier's Medal \$5.00
Silver Star Medal \$5.00
United Nation Korean War Medal \$5.00
WWII Occupation Medal \$5.00
WWII Victory \$5.00

Ribbons: Available for All Medals \$0.80

Appurtenances for Miniature Medals

Arrowhead Device \$1.50
Oak Leaf Clusters \$0.75
Campaign Star \$0.50

For Ribbons:

Arrowhead Device \$1.50
Campaign Star: Single \$0.50
Double \$0.95
Triple \$1.40
Silver (5 Campaigns) \$0.70
Bronze V Device \$1.75
Oak Leaf Cluster: Single \$0.75
Double \$1.40
Triple \$2.00
Presidential Unit Citation \$2.00

Mounting Racks

(If ordering mounting rack only, specify for ribbons or miniature medals - we mount at no charge.)

Racks:

1 - \$0.30, 2 - \$0.60, 3 - \$1.50, 4 - \$2.00,
5 - \$2.25, 6 - \$2.50, 7 - \$2.75, 8 - \$3.00,
9 - \$3.25, 10 - \$3.50, 11 - \$3.75, 12 - \$4.00,
13 - \$4.25, 14 - \$4.50

Lapel Pins:

Distinguished Service Cross \$5.00
Lapel Pin \$5.00
Silver Star Lapel Pin \$5.00
Bronze Star Lapel Pin \$5.00
Soldier's Medal Lapel Pin \$5.00
Purple Heart Lapel Pin \$5.00
Combat Infantry Badge Lapel Pin \$3.00

Enlisted Collar Branch Insignia:

All branches except Aviation \$2.50
and unassigned \$6.50
Aviation and unassigned \$6.50

WWII E.M. Cloth Chevrons -

Only Available: PFC \$2.00
Tech 5 \$6.00

Officers Rank Insignia (Specify Rank) \$3.25

Officers Branch Insignia:

Infantry \$4.25, Field Arty. \$3.00,
Signal \$5.00, Engineers \$3.00, Q.M. \$5.00,
Ordnance \$3.00, Medical \$3.00, M.P. \$3.00

(Inquire for List of Books)
(Mention Rainbow)

World's Easiest Quiz

- How long did the Hundred Years War last?
- Which country makes Panama hats?
- From which animal do we get catgut?
- In which month do Russians celebrate the October Revolution?
- What is a camel's hair brush made of?
- The Canary Islands in the Pacific are named after what animal?
- What was King George VI's first name?
- What color is a purple finch?
- Where are Chinese gooseberries from?
- What is the color of the black box in a commercial airplane?

All done?

Check your answers below!

- | | | | | |
|--------------|------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. 116 years | 2. Ecuador | 3. Sheep and horses | 4. November | 5. Squirrel fur |
| 6. Dogs | 7. Albert | 8. Crimson | 9. New Zealand | 10. Orange |

Dear Ken,

I am a new member of the 42nd Rainbow Div., having signed on in March 2002.

I was a GI in the 242nd Medical Detachment of the 42nd Rainbow Task Force Linden, Alsace Lorraine, attached to the 242nd Infantry from November 1944 to December 1945.

I spent a year in Camp Gruber before being shipped out to Camp Kilmer, New Jersey and then overseas.

I came across this enclosed picture of the members of the 242nd Med. Det. and listed all the names on the back of the original picture. I am listing those names herein as follows.

It is hoped that you can print this picture and names in any upcoming copy of the *Rainbow Reveille*. I cannot find anything about the Medics in any of the previous copies of the *Reveille* for the past year. It is hoped that you will be kind enough to print the picture and names in the next copy of the *Reveille*.

Top row, left to right: Tec 3, Remasnick, PFC Jaehn, Cpl. Goldman, Pvt. Scott, Pvt. McLaughlin, PFC Brieve, Pvt. Dorame, Pvt. Joniec.

2nd row, left to right: PFC Knodle, PFC Vickery, Pvt.

Begin, Pvt. Witkerson, Pvt. Betts, Sgt. LeBourgeois, Tec 3 D.B. Crawford.

3rd row, left to right: Tec 5 Hartzberg, Pvt. Savitt, PFC Fanoelle, Tec 3 Short, Pvt. Slivecky, Tec 5 Watson, Pvt. Mussil.

4th row, left to right: Tec 3 Newman, Staff Sgt. Litwinchuk, Cpl. Blackford
Note: Tec 3 Newman was commissioned a battlefield 2nd Lieutenant soon after we arrived in Alsace Lorraine, France.

Thank you for your endeavor with this letter and its contents.

Yours in Rainbow,
Elmer E. "Doc" Watson
1344 Ellington Road
South Windsor, CT 06074
860-644-1830
E-mail: docwatson1@cox.net



WWII Monument Dedication Parade

As you probably are well aware, the long-awaited Dedication of the WWII Memorial in Washington, D.C. is going to take place on May 29th of this year.

There is a group of Rainbowers in the Washington, D.C. area who are working to put together a float to be in the parade on May 31st. They need to raise \$5,500 before March 30th in order to do this. The RDVM Foundation has put up \$1,000 to start this off. We also have three \$500 donations already, so you can see that it can be done. We are asking interested Rainbowers for \$100 or more, if it is possible, if not please send whatever you can. This will probably be one of the best chances that the Rainbow Division will have for national exposure. Please pass this information on to all your Rainbow friends.

Please send your donation to Jon Janosik (our National Treasurer), 3389 Kingston Lane, Youngstown, OH 44511. Make your check out to RDVMF Parade Float. Thank you for whatever you can give. If by chance, we do not raise the amount required, we will have no float in the parade and your check will be returned to you.

Charlie Fowler

Purple Hearts Tell Tales

They gave their lives and limbs in battle, and now in a quiet Frederick, Maryland community, Ed Maier wants to give something back.

The 35-year-old father of two collects forgotten Purple Hearts awarded to soldiers killed in World War II, and pieces together every detail he can from their lives and deaths.

"It's almost a tangible part of their lives," Maier said of the medals at his Frederick home. "It's symbolic of the sacrifices they made, and we find them in garbage cans."

After he's collected all he can, he posts each soldier's information on his Web site dedicated to World War II veterans killed in action.

Maier knows about every one of the 90 soldiers who once owned the medals he keeps carefully mounted in glass cases – how they lived, how they died, who their families were. Any details he gathers through the National Archives help him fill in the blanks of "lives cut short."

He keeps records of each person in its own binder, labeled with personal details including date of birth and death, unit and military branch. He files them in order in a finished basement spilling with history books and framed medals.

His phone rings constantly, usually dealers, and the M*A*S*H theme song wafts from his TV. Cases of medals sit

amid stacks of framed Purple Heart certificates and the Presidential Accolades that come with each medal.

John Wilcox, adjutant and national executive officer of the 29th Division Association Post 78, said unfortunately these lives are too easily forgotten.

"There are, to our great appeasement, a growing number of younger people who want to learn more," Wilcox said. "Not only about World War I, but also the Korean War and Vietnam War, about why it took place... and how it impacted individuals who served in those wars."

Unfortunately, there's not enough of them, he added, "but we like to think maybe there's a growing trend of younger people seeking that kind of information."

But getting all this information is excruciating.

First, Maier has to find the names of people killed. Then, he finds their serial number through the National Archives.

Next he tries getting personal information and records through either the National Archives in St. Louis, the National Archives for Personal Records in Silver Spring or the Army in Alexandria, Va. Often, he needs the date of death to get an answer. Sometimes even that turns up a negative response after months of waiting.

But what may seem too labor-intensive to most excites the man who holds nearly three degrees in military history (he didn't finish his dissertation). He has come to know these men.

He often refers to the three brothers, the Stoneburners: Two never returned from World War II and the third, the youngest, died in Vietnam.

"I can't imagine a mother having to go through that," Maier said. "You really have to think about that. History is so sterile when you read dates and figures – they have no emotion to them."

"The letters, those are really heart-breaking," he said.

He pulled the binders for the brothers who'd been killed in World War II. A letter from middle child PFC Earl Richard Stoneburner to his little brother reads: "I still have not received any mail from you, but it should start to catch up with me soon. When it does there had better be several letters from a certain young boy that I know or he is going to get a licking when I get home (if he doesn't grow too much). Love, Dick."

But PFC Stoneburner would not return to his family: He was killed just seven days after he wrote this letter on Easter Sunday 1945, and about a month before the war's end.

Some wonder why the medals end up in Maier's hands instead of staying in the families. He agrees the relics are better off with families of the dead soldiers, if they wish to keep them.

"You have to remember that when these boys were killed – and that's what

they were, boys – they didn't usually have kids," he explained. "When their parents died, usually they had big families and a brother or sister would get it... Later when children were cleaning out estates, they'd see a medal and have no emotional attachment to it."

"There's no sin in not having an emotional attachment to the medal," he added. "There is a sin in throwing away. They should let someone have them who wants to remember that these soldiers meant something and their sacrifices meant something."

On the Web: Purple Hearts of World War II: hometown.aol.com/medalcol/purple_hearts_of_world_war_ii.htm

Alpha to Omega: U.S. Army Transport Edmund B. Alexander

*by George Cramer, Weapons Platoon, Co. K,
232nd Regiment, 42nd Infantry Division*

Prologue

Recently I was fortunate to locate a fellow Rainbowers, Ralph Nusbaum in Elida, Ohio. We had served together in the Weapons Platoon of Company K beginning at Camp Gruber, Oklahoma in 1944. During our exchange of letters, Ralph asked if I could recall the name of the ship we sailed on to Europe. On one memento, my Troop Assignment Card, I had written, "Edmund Alexander" so I was able to answer his question.

Ralph wrote, "I cannot remember the name. What I do remember was being on guard duty in the cabin area; the order was 'No one left the area without belt and canteen.'"

"A colonel came by and I challenged him since he wasn't wearing his belt and canteen. The colonel said 'It was all right,' but I said, 'No sir, those aren't my orders, sir.' About then General Linden came up and asked, 'What's the trouble here? It's all right, let him pass.'"

"I said, 'No sir, you are not the Officer of the Day and he's the only one who can change my orders.'"

"The general then told the colonel, 'Go back and get your belt and canteen.'"

"I also remember the Officer of the Day being very pleased with my actions with the general and colonel."

Ralph's experience piqued my interest in researching the history of the *Edmund B. Alexander*, but first let's return to that time and place.

On 25 November 1944, infantrymen of the 42nd Rainbow Division assigned to Task Force Linden boarded the Army troop transport *Edmund B. Alexander*, one among many in convoy bound for the European Theater of Operations. Each person who made that journey has memories of his 15 days and nights crossing

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the Atlantic Ocean, passing through the Strait of Gibraltar into the Mediterranean Sea and landing at Marseille, France on 9 December 1944.

Recollections that come to mind are the labyrinthine passageways and flights of steps descending deck by deck into the bowels of the ship leading ultimately to the designated Company compartment (No. F7); GI's everywhere at every turn and level; the warren of tiered pipe and canvas bunks, bank upon bank, so closely spaced vertically that they were accessible only by one siding in horizontally (bunk No. 164); contortions necessary to put on clothing and boots; a Troop Assignment Card authorizing two daily meals, for the hardy souls, eaten while standing at long metal tables trying to keep the trays from sliding downhill; seasickness; salt water soap and showers; calisthenics topside (side-straddle hop) in wind and spray while the ship wallowed in heavy seas; concern about German U-boats; confinement, fresh air, boredom, letter writing; card games; anxiety, speculation, and rumors; absence of mail call; a panoramic view of other transports and naval vessels in the convoy blanketing the ocean as far as the eye could see; the North Star and Big Dipper; gliding smoothly in darkness past the silent, towering Rock of Gibraltar on the port side with the lights of Morocco on the starboard; and finally, disembarkation at the docks in Marseille.

But, what do we know of the *Edmund B. Alexander* beyond the fact that it carried us to a distant shore? From a historical perspective, it is an irony of fate that one of Germany's premier ocean liners from the early 1900's provided the means whereby the United States moved thousands upon thousands of fighting men to and from Europe in both World War I and World War II, resulting in defeat of the German military machine not once, but twice, during the 20th century. That ship ultimately became known as the *Edmund B. Alexander*.

History of the *Edmund B. Alexander*

The Naval Historical Center, Department of the Navy is the source of the following information; italicized material is from *MARITIME MATTERS*.

Originally the German civilian passenger liner *Amerika* (1905-1917)

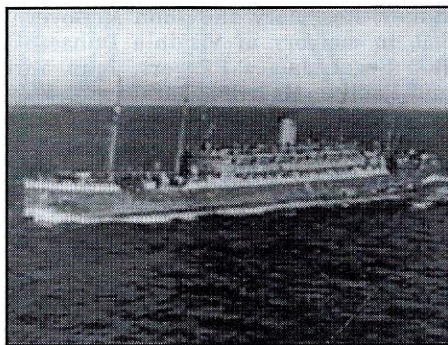
***USS America* (1917-1919)**

Later the U.S. Army Transport *America* (1919-1920)

The U.S. passenger liner *S.S. America* (1921-1940)

The U.S. Army Transport *Edmund B. Alexander* (1940-1957)

USS America, a 21,085-ton transport, was built at Belfast, Northern Ireland, as the German passenger liner *Amerika*. At the time she was the largest ship in the world with an overall length of 687 feet and a beam of 74 feet. Her passenger accommo-



dations, far ahead of any predecessor, included such refinements as suites with a private bathroom, electric lifts, a winter garden, electrical medicinal baths and a Ritz-Carlton restaurant.

Completed in October 1905, she spent the next nine years on the Hamburg-America Line's service between Germany and the United States. On April 10, 1912, while steaming through the English Channel, *Amerika* rammed and sank British submarine B2 off Dover. One man was pulled from the water; 15 were lost. She was caught at the western end of the route when World War I began in August 1914 and was laid up (interned) at Boston, Massachusetts, from then until the U.S. entered the conflict in April 1917. Seized at that time by American authorities, *Amerika* was turned over to the Navy for conversion to a troop transport. In August 1917, while this work was underway at the Boston Navy Yard, she was commissioned as *USS Amerika*, a name soon changed to *America*.

In late October 1917, *America* began her active work, carrying U.S. service personnel across the Atlantic to France. She was employed on this vital duty for almost the remainder of the First World War, making nine round-trip voyages. On 14 July 1918 her seventh eastbound crossing was briefly interrupted by a collision that sank the British merchantman *Instructor* with a loss of 16 dead, but left *America* with slight damage. Her ninth trip to France was notable for a severe outbreak of influenza, which took the lives of more than 50 men. On 15 October 1918, just before departing for another trip, the transport accidentally sank due to poor coal trimming alongside her pier at Hoboken, New Jersey. Six people were killed. Raised and repaired over the next four months, *America* returned to service in February 1919 to begin the first of eight round-trip voyages that brought nearly 47,000 Americans home from the former European war zone. [Author's note: One can speculate that perhaps this ship also carried soldiers of the 42nd Rainbow Infantry Division to and from the battlefields of France.]

In late September 1919, *USS America* was decommissioned and transferred to the U.S. Army Transportation Service. While employed as an Army Transport during the rest of the year, she completed two more trips to and from Europe.

Between January and August 1920, *USAT America* made a long journey, via the Panama Canal and the Pacific Ocean, to carry members of the Czech Legion Vladivostok, Russia, to Trieste, Italy. She was then converted for use as a civilian passenger liner, making her first Atlantic crossing as *SS America* in June 1921. In 1923, *America* was rebuilt at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, emerging with capacity for 692 Cabin and 1,056 Third-Class passengers. In 1926 the ship experienced a serious fire while refitting, causing major damage. She was repaired by 1927, fitted to carry 835 Cabin, 516 Third-Class passengers. *America* resumed New York-Plymouth-Cherbourg-Bremen service. Responding to a distress call from Italian freighter *Florida*, Captain Fried sailed *America* 350 miles through Atlantic gales arriving January 29, 1929. A boat was able to rescue 23 men. *America* arrived in New York on April 9, 1931 after her final transatlantic voyage with United States Lines and was laid up in Chesapeake Bay in September 1932.

The Second World War crisis brought the old steamer back to active duty. Reactivated in late 1940 as the U.S. Army Transport *Edmund B. Alexander*, she initially served as a barracks ship at St. John's, Newfoundland. After mid-1941 the ship was used in the Gulf of Mexico area and, in May 1942, entered a Baltimore, Maryland shipyard to begin a major modernization (her aging engines were giving only 10 knots).

This work, completed in April 1943, gave her new, oil-fired boilers, greater speed, and a much-changed appearance due, in part, to removal of one funnel. *Edmund B. Alexander* spent the rest of the World War II era on transport service, with speed increased to 17 knots and carrying 5,000 troops, between the United States, North Africa and Europe. She continued her work with the Army into the post-war era, after alteration, primarily carrying military dependents. In September 1946 she struck a mine in the Northeast Atlantic, sustained damage but no deaths resulted. Placed in reserve in May 1949, *Edmund B. Alexander* was sold for scrapping in January 1957 after five decades in service.

Author's Note: Edmund Brooks Alexander, the soldier, graduated from the United States Military Academy in 1823. He served many years on the frontier, fought in the war with Mexico and became commanding officer of the newly formed 10th United States Regular Infantry in 1855. He served as Acting Assistant Provost Marshal General for St. Louis, Missouri at the beginning of the Civil War, and as chief recruiting and disbursing officer for the state of Missouri. He was brevetted Brigadier General in 1865, retired in 1869 after 46 years of military service, and died in 1888 at age 86.

Crystal Lake, Illinois
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