

## MEMORIAL DAY Recognizing the Cost of Freedom

*Each year, the last Monday of May is recognized as Memorial Day. In the beginning of our country's tradition, this honored day was known as Decoration Day and was recognized long ago in 1865 and earlier when graves were decorated in remembrance of those who died while serving in the military.*



*Épinal American Cemetery, Dinozé France. Of the 5,255 American graves under its care, 109 are of 42<sup>nd</sup> Infantry "Rainbow" Division Soldiers. 31 of these were killed or died of wounds during the time period and area of the January 1945 Battles for Hatten-Rittershofen and Haguenau, France.*

## IN THE CAUSE OF FREEDOM



Greetings to the RDVF membership family and team. It seems like yesterday that we were welcoming in the New Year and it's hard to believe that Easter has already come and gone. I hope this message finds you all doing well.



## CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

As always there's plenty going on as we eagerly look forward to the Division's redeployment from *Operation Spartan Shield*. The Foundation is in close contact with the Rear Detachment as well as with MG James down range. As expected, *Operation Epic Fury* has pushed the Division's redeployment to the right and we remain postured to support redeployment activities at multiple locations when needed.

The Rainbow Trail WWII battlefield tour scheduled for 16-27 September is shaping up very nicely. There are currently 42 paid registrants with 6 seats still available. If interested contact MG (Ret) John Andonie at (518)368-5512 or [jandonie@aol.com](mailto:jandonie@aol.com). For those who have already paid they can subscribe to the WhatsApp community page, "Join RDVF European Tour 2026."

Rob Giordano who handles Monuments and Memorials for the Board has been engaged on numerous fronts. In June he will visit Camp Gruber, OK where the Division trained prior to deploying to WWII. He will assess what already exists and what else needs to be done if anything. He will also attend the ribbon cutting of the 45<sup>th</sup> Division Museum (now a Brigade) who during WWII also participated in the liberation of Dachau Concentration Camp. In May, Rob will visit both Dachau and Hatten, France. The Hatten-Rittershofen battlefield site is where one of the Division's fiercest battles of WWII took place and where MSG Vito Bertoldo of A Company, 242<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment earned the Congressional Medal of Honor. Read more in this issue on the efforts to preserve the battlefield from industrial development.

## **Presentation of U.S. Wreath at KZ Dachau Memorial Site on 3 May 1992.**

*Three 42<sup>nd</sup> Division veterans Identified in this procession are (first on the left, front row) Ivan Wallace, Medical Detachment, 222<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment; (Second Row first on the right) Dee R. Eberhart, Company I, 242<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment; (far right as spectator wearing dark suit) Ted Johnson, Company H, 232<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment.*

**ALSO PRESENT:** *Captain Bob O'Grady, 12<sup>th</sup> Armored Division; Dr. Alfred E. Laurence (age 82), a former prisoner in the Dachau Concentration Camp between February and October 1937; later U.S. War Crimes Investigator; Jim Jeffrey, U.S. Consulate/ Munich.*

*Photo and caption notes are from materials provided by the family of Dee R. Eberhart; Photo by Sid and Marcella Haley.*

## RAINBOW REVELLE

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Lastly, our thoughts and prayers go out to MAJ Sorffly Davius' family. Davius, who was with the Division G-6, passed away suddenly while deployed on *Operation Spartan Shield*. We also mourn BG(Ret) Richard "Dick" Evans who commanded the 42<sup>nd</sup> "Rainbow" Division from 1987 – 1989.

Enough for now and until the next REVELLE,

"Rainbow – Never Forget!"  
Harry Miller, RDVF Chair

### CHAPLAIN'S PRAYER

*Lord God, each year we pause at this time to recall in a special way those who gave their lives in the service of their country. We pray also for all those who have departed our ranks, particularly during this past year and for all those dear to them. May we who remain behind never fail to remember them and honor them by our own dedication to the cause of freedom and justice for which we all fought and for which these brave companions of ours gave their lives. May we be the better for remembering them, and may our loyalty to them impel us to labor that all men and women may someday live in peace and security, free from fear and poverty and oppression. This we ask in Your name. Amen.*

*Rev. Robert F. Weiss, S.J.*

*RDVF National Chaplain*

*Veteran of Company M, 222<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment, 42<sup>nd</sup> "Rainbow" Division WWII  
[reprinted from the May 1981 issue of The Rainbow REVELLE]*

## NEW YORK'S LEXINGTON AVENUE

## THE ENDURING LEGACY OF THE 69<sup>TH</sup> REGIMENT ARMORY

Jon Molik, RDVF Historian

While I was preparing to write the Rainbow REVELLE historian article for April 2026, a local reporter on my office television was reporting on this year's St. Patrick's Day parade in New York City. They mentioned briefly how the annual event is led, year after year, by the famous 69<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment whose armory home on New York's Lexington Avenue is, I remembered, currently undergoing a 90-million-dollar modernization project(1) What better time than now, I then decided, to discuss the armory's legacy and future.

For more than a century, the 69<sup>th</sup> Regiment Armory, also known as the Lexington Avenue Armory, at 68 Lexington Avenue has stood as a formidable and distinguished landmark, a sentinel to history and the proud home of one of the nation's most celebrated and storied military units: the "Fighting 69<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment. From its inception as an architectural statement to its role in launching modern art in America and its ongoing service as a critical military readiness facility for the New York Army National Guard, the armory's story is deeply woven into the fabric of New York City and the United States Army. And with the 69<sup>th</sup> Infantry's deep and aged connection to the 42 Infantry Division, the armory holds a special place in Rainbow history.



### A Break from Tradition: An Armory for a Modern City

When the plans were first filed in 1903, the vision for the 69<sup>th</sup> Regiment Armory was a radical departure from the norm. Architects Hunt & Hunt deliberately broke the mold of traditional, castellated armory design: turrets, towers, parapets, fortified walls, etc. They envisioned a structure that was for sure a military building, but one that belonged in a modern metropolis, not a medieval

European countryside. As designer Richard Howland Hunt explained, the goal was "to make the building look like an armory in a city, not a medieval castle demanding for completeness a moat and country setting."(2)

Completed in 1906, the impressive Beaux-Arts style structure covers an entire city block between 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> streets. Its stone façade rises 82 feet, featuring an immense arched

entrance, ornate oriole windows, and panels inscribed with the names of the regiment's historic battles: Bull Run, Fair Oaks, Fredericksburg, Antietam, and Chancellorsville, with space pointedly "reserved for the battle record of the future."<sup>(2)</sup> The design was a deliberate shift from the fortress-like armories of the past, embracing a more classical and civic-minded aesthetic. Inside, the armory's immense drill hall – an engineering marvel spanning 201 by 187 feet and crowned by a steel and glass roof rising 126 feet – was designed to be as versatile as it was vast. The building's interior was laid out to support both the military and social functions essential to a militia regiment, complete with officers' quarters, a library, a gymnasium, and even bowling alleys and rifle ranges in the basement.

### **A Legacy Forged in Battle: The "Fighting 69<sup>th</sup>"**

The armory's history is inseparable from the unit it houses. The 69<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, a key component of the 42<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division, traces its lineage to December 1849. It began as a militia of young Irish immigrants in New York City, men who sought to expel the British from their homeland. While history had other plans, the 69<sup>th</sup> Regiment solidified its place in American history with its other military contributions.



The unit's baptism by fire came during the Civil War. Answering President Lincoln's call in 1861, the 69<sup>th</sup> fought fiercely for the Union cause, becoming the unit generals knew they could count on for the toughest, even seemingly hopeless, missions. Its reputation for tenacity and ferocious charges earned it the moniker "The Fighting 69<sup>th</sup>", a nickname famously credited to Confederate General Robert E. Lee after witnessing their valor at the Battle of Fredericksburg. Many of the regiment's traditions arose from this conflict. After its green silk flags were riddled with enemy fire at Antietam, soldiers famously wore sprigs of green boxwood on their hats at Fredericksburg to proudly display their Irish heritage. The attack failed, but burial details found that the Union troops who made it closest to the enemy fortifications were the ones with boxwood in their hats.

This legacy of courage was formally recognized in 1962 when President John F. Kennedy addressed the Irish Parliament. Referencing the Irish Brigade, he said, "They bore a proud heritage and a special courage given to those who had long fought for the cause of freedom." He then presented one of the 69<sup>th</sup>'s Civil War flags to the people of Ireland, an enduring symbol of the shared allegiance between the two nations.

In World War I, redesignated as the 165<sup>th</sup> Infantry, the 69<sup>th</sup> became a core element of the newly created 42<sup>nd</sup> "Rainbow" Division, a command comprised of units across 26 states, including the District of Columbia. The 69<sup>th</sup> infantry regiment of the New York National Guard was an obvious choice. It was one of the most famous and battle-tested militia units in the country, with a celebrated history dating back to the Civil War.

Including New York's "Fighting 69<sup>th</sup>" was essential for the division's prestige and combat readiness.<sup>(1)</sup>



Its chaplain, Father Francis Patrick Duffy became the most highly-decorated clergyman in U.S. Army history. As the regiment began to reflect the broader immigrant story of New York, Father Duffy declared every

member an honorary Irishman, saying, "They are Irish by adoption, Irish by association, or Irish by conviction."<sup>(3)</sup> The unit was commanded by Colonel William "Wild Bill" Donovan, who earned the Medal of Honor and would later found the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), the forerunner to the CIA.

### **The Armory's Varied Service**

The 69<sup>th</sup> Regiment Armory has a rich history as a social and civic venue for New York City beyond its primary role as a military headquarters. The armory made cultural history as the site of the revolutionary 1913 Armory Show, which introduced modern art by artists like Picasso and Matisse. This space has also hosted a wide array of public events, from New York Knicks basketball games between 1946 and 1960 to roller derby and comic art festivals.<sup>(4)</sup>

Militarily, it serves as the ceremonial starting point for the regiment's annual leadership of the St. Patrick's Day Parade and the staging ground for deployments to conflicts from World War I to Iraq and Afghanistan. Profoundly, during the city's darkest hour, the armory became a sanctuary. Following the 9/11 attacks, it was transformed into a Family Assistance Center, providing information and solace to thousands of families awaiting news of their loved ones.

Later, the armory served as the headquarters for Joint Task Force South, which oversaw all COVID-19 missions and operations across New York City, Long Island, and the lower Hudson Valley. This involved coordinating the efforts of approximately 6,000 National Guard service members, including soldiers, airmen, and members of the New York Guard and Naval Militia.<sup>(5)</sup>

### **A Modern Renewal for a Historic Landmark**

After more than a century of continuous and demanding use, the armory is undergoing a comprehensive renovation to transform it into a state-of-the-art, 21<sup>st</sup>-century military and emergency response facility. The project modernizes the building's infrastructure while preserving its historic character. The renovation adapts the building's original design of vertically stacked individual company rooms. By creating a new "interlocking" arrangement of rooms across floors, the design provides the larger, contiguous areas needed for modern military education and training, while retaining crucial historic elements like interconnecting stairs and original fireplaces.<sup>(6)</sup>

The floor and enclosure of the iconic drill hall are also being completely refurbished with advanced surfacing and mechanical systems. This will enhance its versatility, allowing it to support a wide variety of uses, from its traditional role as the starting point for the St. Patrick's Day Parade to a critical staging area for vehicles, personnel and supplies during city-wide and regional emergencies.

# PRESERVING SACRED GROUND

HATTEN-RITTERSHOFEN 2026

A NEW BATTLE, OUR FIGHT

A new report from the Hatten Demain Collectif

From the moment of its completion in 1906, the 69<sup>th</sup> Regiment Armory has stood as a testament to the forward-thinking vision of the architects, Hunt & Hunt. In a deliberate departure from the medieval, castellated armories of the era, they conceived a grand, Beaux-Arts building that was both a formidable military facility and a distinguished civic landmark. The ongoing renovations are sure to maintain the armory's legacy while also preparing it for the regiment's – and therefore the Rainbow's – use for generations to come.

Online locations for article's references in parentheses:

- (1) <https://www.schumer.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/schumer-gillibrand-nadler-deliver-90-million-in-fed-funds-for-historic-69th-regiment-armory-on-lexington-ave-home-to-the-fighting-69th-funds-included-in-just-passed-spending-bill-will-be-used-to-modernize-the-national-guard-readiness-center-to-support-military-training-serve-as-a-state-of-the-art-mobilization-station-and-fully-support-armys-priorities>
- (2) <https://www.nytimes.com/1903/08/13/archives/plans-for-new-armory-sixtyninth-regiment-to-have-a-model-home.html>
- (3) <https://sixtyninth.net/pages/history>
- (4) <https://www.britannica.com/event/Armory-Show-art-show-New-York-City>
- (5) <https://citylifestyle.com/articles/savoring-the-spirit-of-the-fighting-69th>
- (6) <https://ogs.ny.gov/lexington-avenue-armory>

**Photo 1:** Two-story mansard roof that crowns the historic 69<sup>th</sup> Regiment Armory Building on Lexington Avenue between East 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/07/realestate/old-buildings-new-views.html>

**Photo 2:** The painting features Brigadier General Thomas Francis Meagher leading the famed Irish Brigade of the Union Army.

<https://sixtyninth.net/pages/history>

**Photo 3:** Theatrical poster of war film "The Fighting 69<sup>th</sup>", directed by William Keighley. <https://sixtyninth.net/pages/history>

**Photo 4:** 1910 image of Lexington Armory.

<https://ogs.ny.gov/lexington-avenue-armory>

**Photo 5:** Modern image of Lexington Armory

Google Maps. <https://newyorkjimby.com/2024/05/bid-process-opens-for-lexington-avenue-armory-modernization-in-rose-hill-manhattan.html>

**Photo 6:** Lexington Armory Rehabilitation Project: Office Space Rendering.

<https://ogs.ny.gov/lexington-avenue-armory>

For the record, the Communauté de Communes de l'Outre-Forêt is planning to create an industrial park linked to geothermal and lithium extraction on 43 hectares of cultivated land, at the expense of the southeastern part of the battlefield, facing the Esch bunker, and "encompassing" the former Jewish cemetery.



A public interest inquiry was carried out at the end of last year. The investigating commissioner issued a favorable opinion with reservations, notably regarding the lack of a serious search for an alternative site. Concerning the historical and memorial significance of the area, she leaves it to the competent State services to determine the importance of the sites.

As required by French law, archaeological excavations have been ordered. They are currently underway and are expected to be completed by the end of May. Once they are finished, the Prefect will make a decision regarding the future of this land.

Recent developments:

The company **VIRIDIAN**, which was supposed to build a lithium refinery in Lauterbourg (15 km from Hatten) on a 20-hectare site, has gone bankrupt. This means that an industrial brownfield site may now be available to host the refinery initially planned for our area.

The **Rittershofen geothermal plant**, which is meant to partially supply the future industrial zone with heat, has been shut down since December due to repeated seismic events.

We met with Benjamin Rapp, the new mayor of Hatten, and presented our project to him. He was very attentive and deeply moved by the past tragedy. He is expected to discuss the matter with his counterpart in Rittershofen.

**Media attention:** A journalist from *Agence France-Presse* wrote an article about the issues raised by the industrialization of our region and gave us the opportunity to speak. The article was picked up by 17 newspapers, including some international outlets. A senior reporter from *Le Monde*, a major national daily, also came to meet us. His article, which thoroughly addresses the historical and memorial significance of the land, has given us an unexpected level of national visibility. The business daily *Les Échos* also highlighted concerns about public



acceptance of industrial projects, given the area's strong historical and memorial identity.

All these positive developments should not make us forget the firmly stated intention of local officials to secure new tax revenues, nor the State's determination to reindustrialize France.



Regarding the ongoing excavations, they are focused on the Iron Age and on the battle. There has been no communication from the archaeologists. The case is highly sensitive, and they are clearly under instructions to remain silent. A few photos taken from a distance show marker lines and some remains. We should not have any illusions: the battlefield relics are likely to be scarce, due to the meticulous demining carried out in 1945 and decades of "treasure hunters" searching the area.

### What are our prospects?

Our request for the historical protection of the Esch bunker and the battlefield is expected to be reviewed this year by the competent State commissions, although no specific date has been set. The review process will be very long, and the decision-makers are trying to move faster in order to present us with a *fait accompli*.

If the Prefect of Bas-Rhin and the Grand Est Region issues a favorable opinion for the creation of the industrial zone, we will initiate legal actions before the Administrative Court of Strasbourg. To finance these proceedings, we will launch an online fundraising campaign with the support of a partner association.

We plan to meet with both mayors together to present our project in detail and outline the expected benefits in terms of visibility and economic impact. We will propose that they sponsor graves in the Épinal American Cemetery – those of soldiers who died in Hatten and Rittersshofen, or of missing servicemen – through the U.S. Memory Grand Est Association.

On July 4<sup>th</sup>, your country will commemorate its Declaration of Independence. Through his commitment at your side, the Marquis de Lafayette forged a bond of friendship between your nation and ours. The turbulence of current events cannot erase the 250 years that have passed.

Hatten and Rittersshofen stand as symbols of the sacrifice made by your young men for the freedom of our country. It is inconceivable that the universal significance of this place could be sacrificed solely for financial interests. Two hundred and fifty years later, such a thing is simply unimaginable.

The **Collectif Hatten Demain** will defend the memory of those soldiers, of the villagers who hid in their cellars, and of the villages that were destroyed. This is our battle.

**Photo 1:** the Esch Bunker

**Photo 2:** Structure yet undetermined uncovered during the Hatten-Rittersshofen battlefield excavations

Of the 109 World War II Rainbow Division Soldiers under the care of Épinal American Cemetery at Dinozé France, 31 have been found likely to have the descriptions of KIA or DOW in the Hatten-Rittersshofen area and in this time frame (January 9 – 22, 1945) two of which are listed on the Tablets of the Missing there.

For a review of previous articles and reports from Jannick and Muriel Mannière of the Collectif Hatten Demain, please visit - <https://rainbowvets.org/wp-content/uploads/Rainbow-Reveille-January-2026.pdf>  
<https://rainbowvets.org/wp-content/uploads/RAINBOW-TRAIL-February-2026.pdf>

## HATTEN – JANUARY 1945

**Hatten, After 242<sup>nd</sup>s Heroic Defense of the Town**  
*Reprinted from the January 1965 issue of The RAINBOW REVEILLE*

Perhaps no battle was more climactic in all the days of Rainbow in WWII than Hatten. The early part of January 1945 found the Rainbow infantrymen operating as Task Force Linden covering a front of over 30 miles. Beginning on the 5<sup>th</sup>, the Germans crossed the Rhine River and attacked Gambsheim, Offendorf, Herrlisheim and Kilstett in an attempt to force a withdrawal from Strasbourg. The historic defense of the Alsace had begun. After two days of bitter fighting the bridgehead was contained and the Germans began probing for a soft spot. The Germans were looking for a place to concentrate an attack and on January 9 they selected the town of Hatten. Once again, they made a mistake.



Defending the town of Hatten was the First Battalion of the 242<sup>nd</sup> Infantry. Behind them was the Second Battalion of the same regiment which had just moved up after its engagements at Gambsheim. On the other side were elements of two Panzer divisions, among the best in Hitler's Army. They were equipped with 30 Mark V tanks and 10 self-propelled guns.

On the ninth of January the Germans launched their attack and the men of the First Battalion began the defense which was to win them a Presidential Unit Citation. The first assault penetrated the lines of Company B, but these men who were fighting their first real battle didn't think of retreat. They let the

Germans pass and then Company C launched a counterattack which restored the original line.

An assault was launched against Company A, which had taken up positions in Maginot Line pillboxes, and Germans bypassed them. The enemy made their way into Hatten and began a furious house-to-house battle with the men of Company C. In this fighting, every Company C officer was a casualty and the First Sergeant temporarily took charge of the company.

Eighteen enemy tanks followed by 20 personnel carriers attacked Company B, penetrated their lines and surrounded a large Maginot pillbox which a number of men of the company were defending. Still the men held their ground. The original orders had been to hold their positions at all costs and they held! The enemy was well into Hatten, but they could not advance. Antitank mines had been laid across the streets and the men of the 242<sup>nd</sup> infantry were covering these with fire. By now, everyone was in the battle. Cooks and clerks and Battalion Headquarters personnel were operating machine guns and manning rifles.

At the headquarters of the First Battalion, Private First Class Bertoldo was waging his 48-hour defense of the Command Post which won him the Congressional Medal of Honor. When the battalion CP was attacked by a German tank with its 88-mm gun and machine gun fire, Bertoldo remained at his post and with his own machine gun killed the occupants of the tank when they tried to remove mines which were blocking their advance. The attacks continued in the same intensity through 11 January.

These men had staged a magnificent defense, but it had cost them heavily. The battalion began the Battle of Hatten with 33 officers and 748 enlisted men. Fifty-two hours later it had an effective strength of 11 officers and 253 enlisted men. All others were either killed, wounded or missing in action.

Such was a sample of Rainbow's indoctrination to battle. It provided a confidence in the Division that was to hold its spirit high for the arduous engagements that took Rainbow to the border of Austria and victory.

*Photo of the bunker defended by the men of Company A, 242<sup>nd</sup> Infantry regiment is by battlefield historian and guide, Damien Bauer, [Naglo67@hotmail.fr](mailto:Naglo67@hotmail.fr)*

## OUR GIFT TO YOU

**ENCOURAGEMENT** to go forth in the spirit of the 42<sup>nd</sup> Infantry "Rainbow" Division - to recognize, to hold and to demonstrate the tradition, the values and the commitment to excellence of the men and women who have served and are serving in the Division.

To apply for your RDVF Scholarship - [https://rainbowvets.org/wp-content/uploads/RDVF-2026-Undergrad-Scholarship-Instructions\\_fillable.pdf](https://rainbowvets.org/wp-content/uploads/RDVF-2026-Undergrad-Scholarship-Instructions_fillable.pdf)

Or contact:  
 Tammy E. Moss-Hicks, RDVF Scholarship Chair  
 18 Columbine Ave., South Glens Falls, NY 12803  
 Tel: 518-409-0610 or Email: [42IDScholars@gmail.com](mailto:42IDScholars@gmail.com)

## RAINBOW BIRTHDAY MILESTONES With Our Forever Gratitude and Respect We wish a HAPPY BIRTHDAY to:

**Charles Podhaizer**  
 D Company 232<sup>nd</sup> Infantry  
 Regiment,  
 42<sup>nd</sup> "Rainbow" Division  
 100 years on 3/23/2026



*Photos are from the Podhaizer family*



**Locked "Bud" Gahs**  
 Anti-Tank Company, 222<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment  
 42<sup>nd</sup> Rainbow Division  
 102 years on 25 June 2026



*Photo upper left: Bud holding a photo of himself as a young soldier.*

*Photo lower left: Bud Both photos taken and shared by Erin Faith Allen.*

*Photo upper right: Bud and his wife, Angela at Charlotte Douglas International Airport in February 2026 with his nephew, Scott Gahs and his wife. Shared by Scott Gahs.*

## WALKING IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF MY FATHER,

**Tec5 James “Jim” Derry,  
Anti-Tank Company,  
242<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment,  
42<sup>nd</sup> “Rainbow” Division**

By Dennis Derry



In July of 2025, I took the *Band of Brothers Tour*. This was an awesome tour; I got to see where our troops fought and died. Standing on Omaha Beach was serene; to stand near the water's edge about the time the invasion occurred and seeing the beach they had to cross under fire was very moving. But my favorite part of the trip was spent with Damien Bauer.

Damien picked me up in Strasbourg and I spent four wonderful days with him.

We went to several different places where the 42<sup>nd</sup> Infantry “Rainbow” fought, including the Moder River, where the...242<sup>nd</sup> fought the German SS troops trying to cross to get to Haguenau. We also visited Hatten, where a fierce tank battle occurred. This is the place my Dad earned his Bronze and Silver medals on 9 January 1945 during the Battle of Hatten. We visited a memorial for the 42<sup>nd</sup> “Rainbow” Division outside of Hatten, halfway between the communities of Hatten and Rittershofen where I had the honor of laying flowers on the memorial.



I also got to walk the road that my father drove to get daisy chain anti-tank mines and his pickup and delivery of ranking officers. This experience was so moving to me to honor the men of the 42<sup>nd</sup> “Rainbow” Division. To walk on this hallowed ground that the brave men of the 42<sup>nd</sup> fought and died on was an experience I will never forget.

This sacred ground between Hatten and Rittershofen needs to be kept as is for the memory of those that fought and died here.

I also had the honor of visiting the Siegfried Line where the 42<sup>nd</sup> fought. We met up with Merlin Sturm and his brother who guided me on a short walk to the foxholes on the Siegfried Line, where the Germans were about 200 yards away. A “short walk” to these boys was 3.5 miles uphill (not a short walk for me). These two, young 42<sup>nd</sup> reenactors were very knowledgeable and a great addition to my trip.

*This was an experience I will never forget as is the memory of the 42<sup>nd</sup> “Rainbow” Division.* I felt so much emotion having the chance to walk where the 42<sup>nd</sup> men fought and died for this country. Damien gave me such a great experience to see and walk in their footsteps. If anyone wants to visit that area, I highly recommend Damien Bauer. If I get the chance to go back, it will be with him.

**Photo 1:** Dennis Derry and Damien Bauer

**Photo 2:** Hatten-Rittershofen Memorial in sandstone bas-relief images representing two tanks, one chasing the other – memorializing the great battle there in which the 79<sup>th</sup> Division and 14<sup>th</sup> Armored Division also participated in January 1945, the dedication in 1985 attended by both German and American veterans; next to the sandstone memorial is the sandstone bench dedicated in September 1990 by the 242<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment, 42<sup>nd</sup> Division veterans “In the Memory of our fallen Comrades and Civilian dead.”

**Inset photo:** Then-Cpl James A. Derry as a member of the A-T Co./242<sup>nd</sup> Infantry, 42<sup>nd</sup> Division in training at Camp Gruber in the fall of 1944.

### A LINGERING MEMORY

**From ALVIN R. CAHOON, Company A/ 242<sup>nd</sup>,  
taken prisoner by the Germans on 9 January 1945  
at the Battle of Hatten, France.**



Sgt. Cahoon was taken prisoner by the Germans on 9 January 1945 as his A Company defended Bunker No. 9. in the line of bunkers held by the 242<sup>nd</sup> along the Maginot Line east of Hatten.

In a letter to his friend, Dee R. Eberhart, a veteran of I Company, 242<sup>nd</sup> Infantry

Regiment, dated September 16, 1977, Al wrote:

“...Was darn sorry to hear that you have had such a ‘disappointing’ year’ with your Bartlett pears, but was glad that the young apple trees have helped some to make up for what you did not gain from the pears. I have tried to picture your fruit acreage. Certainly, it must be a beautiful sight in the springtime with the blossom season in full bloom. Can never seem to think of orchards and not recall the spring of 1945. With our liberation from the

POW camp, April 23 [by the Russians], the Russians soon marched to the city of Riesa about 20 kms. away, where, they held us as their 'guests' for about 30 days before turning us over to the Americans. I remember passing so many orchards just starting to bloom and then, later, in Riesa, the orchards there and the trees, etc., all in bloom. With the war near a close and liberation, etc., I guess this spring seemed more meaningful...a new life...like being reborn again. These little things about spring, at that time, somehow, I noticed more closely. To you, it must have appeared refreshing also, knowing that the war was ending, while yet still seeing some of death until May 8<sup>th</sup>."

*These words from Al Cahoon are shared from correspondence made available by the Eberhart family.*

### **WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL FILE**

Deaths Reported since January 2026

**BAKER**, Roger Otis Headquarters 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion  
242<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment  
**HAMILTON**, Luther M. Jr. Company C  
222<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment

### **RAINBOW DIVISION VETERANS FOUNDATION, INC. Contributions Received January – April 2026 SCHOLARSHIP ENDOWMENT**

- 100. Rev. Dr. Patricia Cockrell Wood, in memory of her father,  
*Alvin J.W. Cockrell Btry C, 150<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery (1<sup>st</sup> Indiana)*  
*World War I*
- 100. Patricia Brown, in memory of her father,  
*Leonard B. Chandler, 151<sup>st</sup> Machine Gun Bn (2d Georgia)*  
*World War I*
- 200. John J. Bobb, in memory of his father,  
*John A. Bobb, Medic, Co. A, 242<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment*  
*World War II*

### **WINTER REMEMBRANCE**

Once again this time of year,  
As shadows lengthen  
Over this snowy land  
Of peaceful valley farms  
And distant forested mountains,  
The ghosts begin to stir.

Snow is deep on the forest floor,  
Muffling murmuring voices and idling engines.  
An overcast sky brings no cheer.  
In the distance a quiet village waits,  
Starkly outlined against fields of white.

It is today as it was then.  
Only in the mind of distant recall  
Are visions seen that are not –  
The village destroyed by fire and fury –  
The shattering sounds of war  
And voices of dead comrades heard again,  
While all is silent.

**By Dee R. Eberhart  
Reprinted from  
*Relics of War*  
World War II Poems  
2000**