



71ST INFANTRY DIVISION

Red Circle News

AUGSBURG, GERMANY

Vol. 25, No 1

71st Division Association Newsletter

January, 2011

SEE PAGE 3 FOR EARLY ANNOUNCEMENT 2011 REUNION, CINCINNATI, OHIO, SEPTEMBER 7-11, 2011

HISTORY-HISTORIAN XXVIII

"XXVIII" - Wait a minute: That is 28 in Arabic numerals, translating to 14 years before my ancient (1959) and aging Olivetti, held together in spots (literally) by a tad of duct-tape and a bent paper-clip. It doesn't seem possible that it has been that long, but the calendar does not lie. Besides, there is nothing I enjoy more than those biannual months before each issue when I set aside all other projects until I am satisfied with the articles I am working on, and have shipped then off to the Editor.

This issue is no exception, especially since we had better-than-normal response to the three major articles in the July 2010 issue, resulting in offers of additional materials which justified a second look at the 1985 Reunion of 71st members in Linz and Steyr, Austria. My first responder was Marjorie A Kordell, widow of Robert F. Kordell (Co I, 5th Inf), who not only provided accurate identification of the original participants, but also more text and photographs. A month or so later Nadine L. Foerster, widow of Donald A. Foerster (Med Det, 2nd Bn, 14th Inf), and Barbara Vaclav, wife of Andrew (Div HQ) also offered additional information.

More than I hoped for: That ad hoc meeting with only 27 veterans present was of prime importance to us all and led almost immediately to the 1986 formation of the 71st Division Association and the first Annual Meeting in Colorado Springs.

The second continuation from the July 2010 issue is a completion of the Gleemen of the 66th's story based on their 30-page publication in 1945. Owing to space limitation I had to divide the story so that this second part is mostly a picture album of high-jinks from their production skits, a recognition of the backstage and technical personnel who contributed greatly to the success of this group of fine voices and zany actors, concluding with more photos and the aftermath of the Danube Sym-follies project. My thanks to Morris Flygare, son of John Flygare (Co A, 66th Inf) and Stanley D. Howell (A-T Co, 66th) who sang Bass with the group. My thanks to both gentlemen for suggesting the subject and making a wealth of material available: It was a pleasure to work on this.

The third continuation is, of course, the return to "mining the

mother-lode" in the form of Blue Mike, The Story of Company M, 14th Infantry, by its CO, Capt Pete Sims. This work is too voluminous to reprint in its entirety, but we plan to include selected portions in each future issue. Last time we all enjoyed reliving the joys and comforts of the Troopship experience. In this issue we recall the mud, cold, wind and rain, of dear old Camp Old Gold: I had a chill and shivers as I reread the selections presented here. I hope you all will feel the same: Thanks again, Pete, for the opportunity.

All that being said, several shorter pieces received over the past year have been submitted for this issue as well. But the Editor works in mysterious ways and I never know what will ultimately appear in Red Circle News pages. I do know that my hopper here in Colorado is essentially empty. So, friends and/or readers (hopefully both), it is time again to appeal for contributions to keep this old tub afloat: Editor LaPine has suggested to me that we do an article, or perhaps an issue based on the music we all heard in the WWII era; "Drinking Rum and Coca Cola," etc. This appeals highly to me personally, since from 1938 to about 1951, I tried seriously to be a musician. But I was a drummer and not a one-man band, so, just as seriously, I do not want to influence this suggested subject. It was the Big-Band era, and the Armed Forces- and Blue Networks- did their best to make the music style available to us. Do you remember the noontime popular music program in Bavaria, "Lunchen in Munchen" with emphasis on the Big-Bands of the day, especially Glenn Miller? Perhaps you were, like me, at the Mansion Ballroom on the north side of Youngstown, Ohio one summer evening in 1941 when Charlie Barnet introduced his new vocalist, gorgeous in her strapless crimson evening-gown, as Miss Lena Horne, "his newly discovered American Indian" singer. That was to help her escape the taboo-of-the-day that prevented talented black musicians with working in "all white" bands. Barnet was a pioneer.

Anyway, as always, I am inviting contributions for your Red Circle News, and at this time, especially stories connected with the Big Band era. Send them and I'll work them in.

Leo T. Kissell (Co C, 66th Inf)
6331 Mesedge Drive
Colorado Springs CO 80919-1814
(719)531-9662

TAPS

Bowers, Troy L	Co E, 5th Inf
Carter, Jonny	Co B, 66th Inf
Carter, Velcie, wife of Jonny Carter	Co B, 66th Inf
Crayne, Ferne B, widow of Clarence Crayne	
Culler, Edward R	
Damas, Richard	Btry A, 607th FA Bn
Davis, Charles R	Btry C, 564th FA Bn
Dyche, Louise, widow of David D Dyche	Co L, 5th Inf
Engle, Helen, wife of Stanley R Engle	Co F, 66th Inf
Figaredo, Michael R	5th Inf
Flygare, Flora H, wife of John W Flygare	Co A, 66th Inf
Giesey, Joseph I	71st Cavalry Recon Troop
Greene, Ethel W, wife of Paul K	3Bn Hq Co, 66th Inf
Herskowitz, Gerald T	Hq Btry, 564th FA Bn
Huber, Jacob H	Svc Co, 66th Inf
Jensen, Clarence K	Co M, 14th Inf
Long, Marguerite, widow of Thomas	Co K, 14th Inf
Martin, Rose, wife of Jack P Martin	Hq Co, 5th Inf
Milligan, Howard S	2Bn Hq Co, 5th Inf
Morelli, Dominic J	Hq Co, 5th Inf
Nichols, Norman L	71st Div Hq
Rickett, Frank L	Co H, 5th Inf
Schlesinger, Susan W, wife of Bela Schlesinger	Co M, 14th Inf
Smith, Lawrence W	1Bn Hq Co, 14th Inf
Stepanski, Ted	
Stewart, Joseph B	
Stevens, Harold F	Cannon Co, 66th Inf
Stover, Pearl, widow of Norvell D	71st Div Hq
Vutetakis, Spiros (Sam)	Co G, 14th Inf
Zollner, Frank E	Co I, 14th Inf

ERROR-RETRACTION-APOLOLGY

Like an unexpected call from the other side, my phone rang on November 10, 2010. It was Dale L Hall, 4th Platoon Machine Gunner from Co M, 66th Inf., who had just glanced through Taps in the July, 2010 issue of the RCN and found himself on the list! "To be, or not to be?" Whether 'twas better to be happy that it was not so, or to be PO'd that a mistake was made, Dale took the unfortunate error very well and accepted my sincere apology. He agreed that now he had a chance to do it again – hopefully in the distant future. Kidding aside, it

was a serious matter. We do not have a formal system for receiving Taps information. I get some, the Editor receives some, and the Secretary gets some. Without a system, we have to accept received information as fact. Something went wrong this time. LTK

RED CIRCLE NEWS ON THE WEB

Computer users: Type RED CIRCLE NEWS in your web browser to see the latest Red Circle News Editions. Some recent visitors' messages:

Mountaingoat49@comcast.net:

I'm looking for men of the 71st Division who have photos off my father, Joseph Bernard Stewart.

Physlet@hotmail.com:

My grandfather Frank A Garnet served with the 71st

Wakajawaka@skypoint.com

I am eternally grateful to the 71st for liberating my father from a concentration camp near Steyr. He was German and was sentenced for crimes against the Nazi regime. We immigrated to this country in 1957 when I was 3 years old. My family lives in Minneapolis and we are proud American citizens. The US has always sent its bravest and finest to fight for the rights and freedoms of others. I am a direct benefactor of one such effort.

Jimsharoruff@hotmail.com

I'd like to know what unit my Dad served in. He was in the 71st and in Co F, but I don't know which Regiment. He was Infantry. His name: James Pierpont Ruff, Sr.

Nicklu52@verizon.net

Ted Stepanski, my father-in-law, served with the 71st and has passed on. Would like to hear from someone who served with him.

R23pc@yahoo.com

My Dad Edward R Culler was in the 71st. He passed away this year. Any information about him would be helpful.

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71st DIVISION ASSOCIATION, 2011 REUNION, CINCINNATI, OHIO, SEPTEMBER 7-11, 2011 HOTEL



Our hotel will be the Drawbridge Hotel, located at 2177 (2300 for Mapquest) Royal Drive, Ft Mitchell KY 41017. With our Reunion scheduled for Wednesday, September 7, 2011 to Sunday, September 11, 2011, our special 71st Division Association room rate is \$81.00 + tax for single, double, triple, or quad occupancy. The current tax rate is 11.3%. Assuming no change in the tax rate, the room rate including tax will be \$90.15. A complimentary deluxe continental breakfast is provided for all registered guests. The hotel offers free shuttle service from and to the airport.

The hotel phone number is 859-341-2800 or toll-free 1-800-354-9793

To assure getting the 71st Division Association rate, your reservation must be received by them by August 8, 2011. After this date the 71st Division Association rate will apply only on a room available basis. A credit card guarantee or first night deposit is required to confirm a reservation. Cancellations of individual rooms must take place prior to 6:00 PM on the arrival date or the individual will be charged as a "no show" for the first night.

TOURS PLANNED (Somewhat Tentatively)



Thursday 9/8 - A two-hour tour of Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky, lunch, a visit to the Cincinnati

Museum Center, where we will view an Omnimax Theater presentation and visit the Cincinnati History Museum which includes an exhibit titled



"Cincinnati Goes to War," which is about WWII. After this we will have dinner at the revolving restaurant atop the Radisson Hotel in Covington, Kentucky, from which we can view the places and areas that we visited in the morning.

Friday 9/9 A 1-1/2 hour narrated sightseeing cruise On the Ohio River, followed by lunch and entertainment at the Hofbrauhaus in Newport KY. We will then ride the Ducks through the streets and plunge into the river for a while before driving again on land and blowing our duck whistles and waving to people as we pass.



For those who are reluctant to ride the Ducks, they can shop at stores at our popular Newport on the Levee until we return from the 45-minute to 1-hour Duck ride. Incidentally, if you are game, the Ducks can accommodate a wheelchair.

Saturday, 9/10 A trip to Germantown Ohio to visit a Military Museum which, among many WWII items, includes uniforms and souvenirs from 71st Division soldiers. Then we'll have lunch and shop at Cincinnati Premium Outlets.

DAILY SCHEDULE

The final schedule for registration, tours, hospitality room, business meeting, memorial service, mixer, group photo, and banquet will be in the July RCN, which will be mailed early in July.

POST EXCHANGE



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Red Circle Pride March	5.00	_____	_____
Decal (Pkg/3)	2.00	_____	_____
5th Inf Crests	11.00	_____	_____
License Plate Frame	9.00	_____	_____
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	Total	_____	_____

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Address _____

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ROBERT D FUNKE, Secretary 516 Vincent Road SE Huntsville AL 35802

**RETURN TO
THE DANUBE SYM-FOLLIES (PART II)
Stan Howell (A-T Co, 66th Inf) and
Morris Flygare (son of John Flygare,
Co A, 66th Inf) and Leo T Kissell**

Part One of this musical Saga concluded with the account of the Gleemen of the 66th's travels among the varied venues of the Division's territory and beyond. It was based on the 1945 "Yearbook of the Danube Sym-Follies," copies of which were sent to me by both of the co-authors. Additional material from Stan Howell brought the story forward to the dissolution of the performing group in December 1945. This part presents a photo-album of Skits, recognition of the "back-stage" staff and Stan Howell's additional comments and observations on his post-war experiences relating to the Gleemen's season in the ETO including photographs from his memorabilia albums.



Fig. 1. The full company in full flight during a performance of "Oklahoma." Arrow from the top points to John W. Flygare, baritone, and from the left, to Stanley D. Howell, bass.

"Whatever their future may be ... the songs of the Gleemen will always ring in their ears. Inspiring songs like the Great Day, The Lord's Prayer, The Night is Young, In the Meadow Lands, Begin the Beguine, the swaying Tea for Two, Roger Young or the Infantry Song . . . Whether they be . . ."

There are eleven photos of the brief-skit performers, along with one-liners that mostly -you hadda be there - but the homecoming of Lundgren still cracks me up!



Fig. 2. John R Jamison (center) "It's roasted...It's toasted...It's burnt..."



Fig. 3. Roland J Tiso (Co C, 66th Inf) "Everybody wants to get into the act! I got a million of 'em."



Fig 4. William H Ichter (baritone) "Bayou Boogie Of...Black and Blue...Impressions."

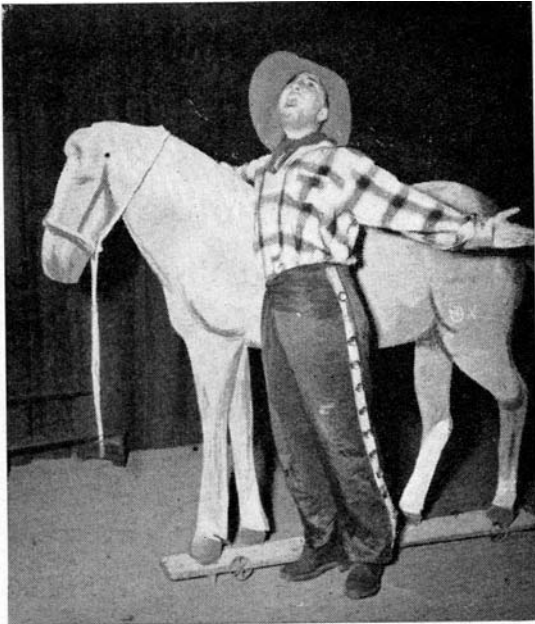


Fig. 5. Bernard Williams
“Hi Ho Silver, Away!
...Aw, Come on, Horse, Away.”



Fig 6. Raymond H Lundgren and Bernard Farber.
“...Annie come with me to the Gasthaus and let me
show you my loot!”



Fig. 7. Steve Hambalek: And so, as it must to all men,
home came PFC Dmitri Flanagan, Infantryman,
Rifleman, and met...his mother...
(Mrs) Hargitt: “My Son! My Son!”
Ray Lundgren: “Haben Sie Eier?”

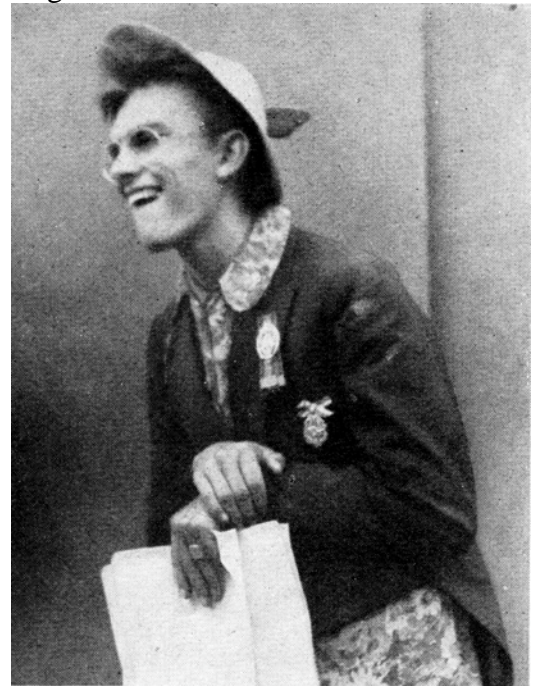


Fig. 8. Henry M Stock (Baritone)
“...Honorable people of Japan...”



Fig. 9. The CROONADERS with "The Romantic Baritone Voice of Joe Gillespie" (center) (l to r) Dewey E. Bovender (1st Tenor), Kindell D. Emde (2nd Tenor), John W. Embree and Clarence B. Jorgensen (Basses).



Fig. 12. Bernard Farber "Then, in my opinion, Paraguay will declare war on Uruguay."



Fig 10. Charles W. Coon (Tenor) "Chesty Little Devils – Aren't You?"



Fig 13. SPECIAL SERVICE OFFICERS (from the left):
Lt. Ralph W. Tunison
Lt. Victor Wilkowski
Lt. Kenneth C Schiebal
Lt. Nels Simonson



Fig. 11. Come in, Walter...who is that all-Ukrainian Boy with the Stiff Upper Lip?"
John S, Lauder (Tenor)



Fig. 15. BUSINESS OFFICE: Joe Steinmetz, Bernard Farber, Edward Patrick, and Steve Hambalek.

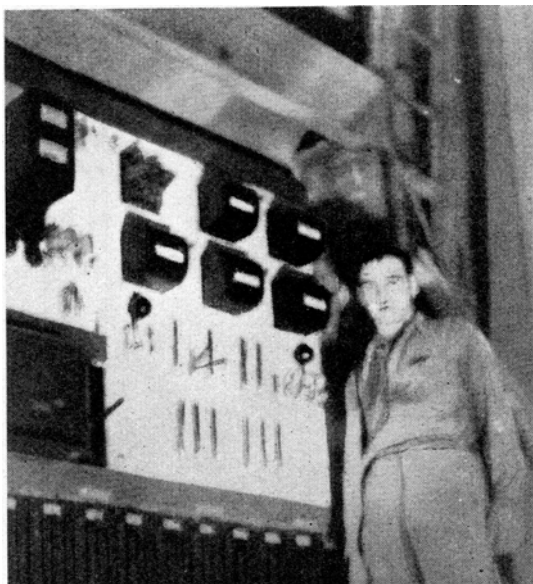


Fig. 16. STAGE ELECTRICIAN:
John Del Arco



Fig. 17. PUBLICITY AGENT
Lewis Monk



Fig. 18. STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
William P. Hannah

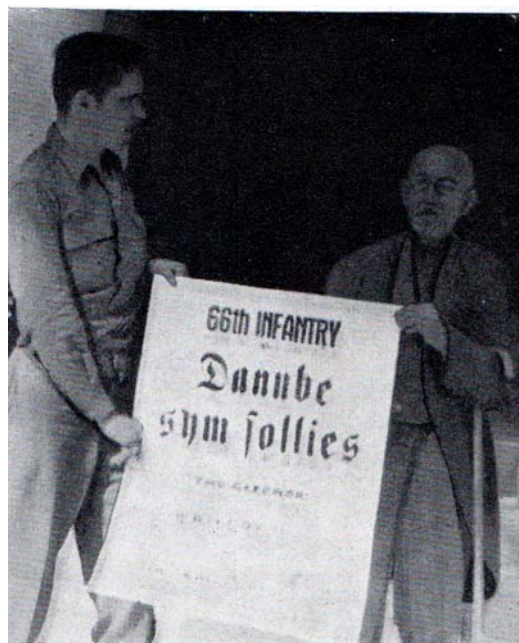


Fig. 19. "The Songs...The Gags...
Conductor Harry John Brown with the Poster, and
even 'Joe Bananas!'"
From Stan's Continuation Notes "During our summer
rehearsals in Dillingen, a certain old man used to hang
around outside. He knew that some kind soldier would
give him some chocolates, cigarettes and/or butts. We
called him 'Joe Bananas'" (Dimly seen on frock-coat
and with cane, above.)

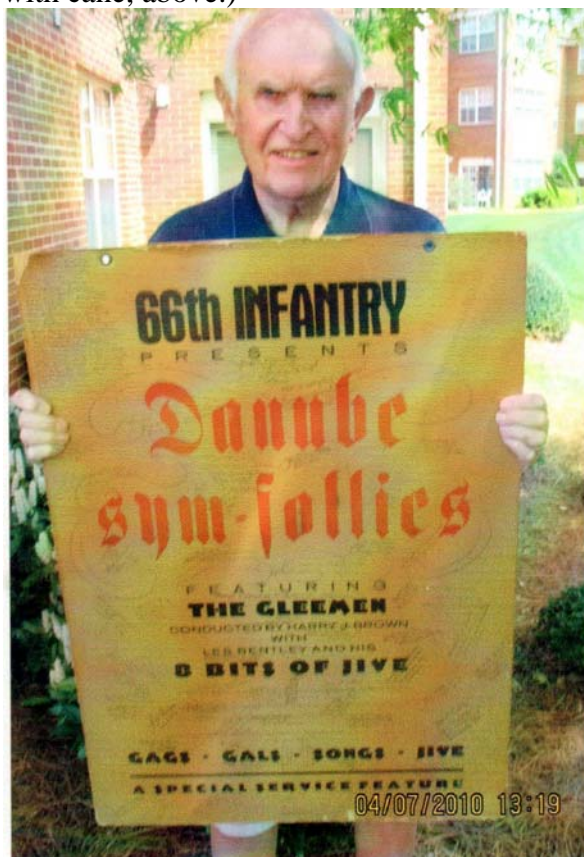


Fig 20. ...And PFC Stan Howell, with the poster, 65
years later.

“On the poster picture is a faint list in the top left corner of the many places we performed. In various spots in the poster are signatures and addresses of the Gleemen. This information does not come out clearly in the photograph.”

“My wife Jean and I went back to Oberammergau in 1980 to see the Passion Play. We asked about our 1945 guide, Annie Rutz, who played the Virgin Mary at that time (RCN, July 2010, pages 11-12, Figures 14-15). We were informed that she had died recently and was in a nearby cemetery. We then walked to it and observed Annie’s burial marker close to the entrance.”



Fig. 21. A portion of the vast stage of the Festspiel Haus, Oberammergau, Bavaria (1945).



Fig 22. Stan and Jean Howell (circa 2000)

MEMBERS OF THE GLEEMEN GROUP ON A WELL-DESERVED FURLOUGH IN LONDON – January, 1945



Fig. 23. Joe Kozaritz, Stan Howell, and “Berry” Berenbaum.



Fig 24. Henry Eddington, Ray Lundgren, George Slack, Tony (?) new member, and Gordon Taylor.

“I tried to keep in touch with a few Gleemen since 1945. My first attempt, with John Henry Brown, was in the Summer of 1947, when John Lauder (Gleeman, 2nd Tenor) and I were counselors at a camp in Connecticut. On a day off we hitch-hiked (I wouldn’t do it now) to the Tanglewood Music Festival in Lenox, Mass. He was taking conducting lessons from Serge Koussevitzky of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. There was another fellow taking lessons at that time – Leonard Bernstein! Jack and I didn’t meet

Leonard, but we enjoyed the visit with Harry. I was never to see him again. Before entering the service he had been a guest conductor of the Chicago Symphony, and before he left Europe he conducted the GI Symphony in Paris. At some point he became conductor of the Milwaukee Orchestra and was music professor at SUNY, Fredonia, NY. More recently my musical associates told me that he had passed away. In 1997, living at Tryon Estates, NC, we met an interesting lady at dinner. I asked where she was from, and she answered "Oak Park, Illinois." I said I only knew one person from Oak Park, Harry John Brown, and she said 'He was my paper boy.' (Small World!)" "Part of the glue that kept the Gleemen moving forward together was our piano accompanist John P. Timmerman who currently lives in Lakeview, Ohio. We met originally through musical friends in Ohio. "Vernon Roach of Oak Grove, MO was my Gleeman roommate and kept in touch through the 1960's. By 1987 he had disappeared from his previous environment.

"I spoke to Ray Lundgren a few years ago; he lives in the Chicago area.

"Jack Lauder of Meriden CT – we had a good time in the above-mentioned summer camp job in 1947.

"Calvin Y. Rogers, although he was no in the Gleeman Group, he and his violin seemed to be close to the scene. He was from the Mine Platoon of our A-T Company. Perhaps he played a solo in a concert; I don't recall. Anyway when he and his Ashland College of Ohio chorus were on tour at Langhorne (where we used to live) in SE Pennsylvania, we made contact and had a short visit. Then in 1996 during the 71st Division Reunion in Colorado Springs, he invited me and a few others to his home for lunch."

The LONG and the SHORT of IT, in conclusion.



Figs. 25-26 Our mutual friend – Calvin Y Rogers, here with tall Gleeman H. Vernon Roach (both A-T Co, 66th Inf) at Partenkirchen, Germany, November, 1945.

BLUE MIKE CONTINUED (Part 2)

The Story of Company M, 14th Infantry by Capt W P (Pete) Sims (CO) so far, has delivered us on the war-torn and devastated concrete docks of Le Havre, France on the early morning of 7 Feb 1945.

February 7, 1945 - Camp Old Gold, France
At 0700 hours, Co. M went single file down the gangplank of the "General Brooke," carrying everything we had brought aboard to 2 1/2 ton trucks and started to drive to a destination unknown other than that which we had been told, "a training center." LeHavre was in shambles with hardly an untouched building to be seen. Even the streets were badly damaged in places. Cpl. Martin D. Ritz was one who was amazed at the devastation of LeHavre. He couldn't believe that any one town could be so badly damaged by bombing and shellfire. Soon we were beyond the outskirts traveling east through the Normandy countryside. Our first impression was that of neatly manicured farm plots all bounded by the proverbial French hedge rows.

Thirty kilometers later we arrived at "Camp Old Gold." There were three of these camps scattered at various points in Normandy; all named for a brand of cigarette. The other two were "Lucky Strike" and "Philip Morris." The Germans had been pushed out of western and southern France some five months before, so that the life of the French civilian had returned to some semblance of normalcy with American occupation.

Camp Old Gold was a disappointment to say the least. We had hoped for better but hadn't really expected it. Camp Old Gold was a sea of tents and mud, located about one kilometer from the town of Doudeville, France. We were unloaded and assigned a camp area. The first order of business was erecting pyramidal tents which slept six to eight men. We carved out our own tent locations and a company street.

February 8, 1945 - Camp Old Gold, France
Our purpose at Camp Old Gold, as designated by regiment, was to continue training exercises and to plan and organize for movement of the regiment to a combat area.

We were provided gravel for tent floors. Later, we had gravel for the company street. Even so, the mud up to the ankles seemed to be ever present. Each man had a cot, his pack, and shared a tent to call home for the time being. Camp Old Gold was located in an operational agricultural field area. The soil was tilled, fertilized, harvested; this process having been repeated for several centuries. A soil so well-tilled needed only water to become mud. It rained nearly every day for the month we were at Camp Old Gold.

With such good ingredients, we had a bountiful supply of mud.

One of the less desirable details a man could be assigned was shoveling mud from the roadway ditches, the company street and the drip line around each tent. Nearly everyone received this assignment sooner or later. We had our own company slit trench latrine which had to be replaced occasionally as it filled up with water. Hence, the latrines were located on the highest ground.

Censorship of letters continued and would continue until May 18, 1945, ten days after VE Day, at which time the commanding general issued an open letter to all troops listing our itinerary across Europe. Limited censorship on events was continued and required a delay of six months after the occurrence of the event. France is an amazing place. The people are very hospitable. Tie go into Doudeville to try to find some wine, cognac or calvados, but very little is available for sale. We have had more luck being given drinks by the French families we have met. The language is a formidable barrier. I have learned a few sentences in French. By the use of my hands and arms, I am able to make myself partially understood. I grin like a monkey and answer "Oui" to everything.

Today I sent home a money order for \$150, unwilling compliments of the poker players coming overseas. We've been too busy since arriving here to get a poker game started.

February 9, 1945 - Camp Old Gold, France

Our men were required to do two hours of guard duty in the rain and cold.

We often wondered what we were guarding since there were 30,000 GIs within a four mile radius, but that was the Army way. Every man pulled his share of KP which was not bad duty. Everyone had a new-found appetite at Camp Old Gold and KP was an extra way to load up on chow.

Even though we were living in a sea of mud, we held daily bunk and equipment inspections, much to the displeasure of the men who reasoned correctly that we were in a combat zone, not doing garrison duty. Once again, such is the way of the Army.



Cpl Raymond F. Mitchell



Shoveling Mud at Camp Old Gold: (l-r) Pfc Frank Pecoraro, Pfc Charles Hermesdorf, Cpl Lester Keyser, Pfc Winston Garrette, S/Sgt Harry Burgener

Lt. Robinson and I went into Doudeville for our second look at the village. Through an interpreter, we met the owner of one of the stores. In the course of our short conversation, we mentioned our desire to hear more of the war news. The Frenchman said he had a radio and invited us to visit his home in the evening. We arrived at 2000 and met his wife. The French couple could speak practically no English and we spoke less French. The BBC news broadcast from London didn't come on until 2100, so the four so us were just sitting there smiling at each other. The Frenchman left the room and returned immediately with a pad and a set of dominoes. We soon had a heated game of dominoes underway and were surprised to find the French keep score with Xs exactly the same as we in the States. Just before 2100 the man served us with a tot of calvados. We listened to the news broadcast, finished the calvados, left them small gifts of cigarettes and soap and hung a "Merci beau coup" on our hosts and departed. This was such an enjoyable evening for all, that we repeated it at least one or two times per week throughout our stay at Camp Old Gold. Through an interpreter, we learned that the Frenchman and his wife both served in the FFI (Les Forces Francaises Interieures), literally meaning, "The French Internal Force," or more commonly called "Free France," during the German occupation and were on the verge of discovery on several occasions. Their real name was Corot but they used the name of Durant during their service with the FFI. They were indeed a brave, patriotic and thoroughly enjoyable couple.

February 10, 1945 - Camp Old Gold, France

Lt. Prekker, Lt. Davis, Lt. Hayes and Lt. Thode are bunked in one pyramidal tent and Capt. Edwards, Lt. Robinson, Lt. Stewart and I share another one. It's muddy as hell here but if we stay awhile we can

eventually fix the place up a little. It's windy and cold today; outside of that and the mud, we could live a fairly good life. The country around here is all green and is perhaps the most beautiful countryside most of us have ever seen. Since the Germans left only a few months ago, the French civilians don't have much to eat and little clothing. They seem glad to see us and are quite friendly. Lt. Thode and a couple of friends went into Doudeville to try the French liquor. There was very little not taken by the Germans, and what was left was of very poor quality. The beer is very flat and has no "tang," the wine is extremely weak and doesn't taste too good and the calvados, hastily made, goes down like liquid fire. We are paid in US printed French occupational francs. The exchange rate for each franc is approximately two cents, USA. This always required carrying a bundle of francs to have any money to spend. While in France all of our pay was in occupation francs. When we get to Germany, we will be paid in occupation German marks.

February 11, 1945 - Camp Old Gold, France

We got our company street and sidewalks graveled today. It was a big improvement. Still, everyone continues to wear overshoes. We sleep very well with a sleeping bag and blanket. In every tent the men take turns getting up in the morning to start the fire in the tent stove. Today is Sunday but it seems no different from any other day. We had Spam for dinner and afterward the Red Cross mobile stopped by the company and added doughnuts, coffee, a couple of cigarettes, a stick of gum and matches for every man. It is not much but is it most appreciated. We wash and shave about every two or three days depending on the availability of water. We have a very limited supply of water for necessities but none for bathing. Most of us are getting pretty raunchy smelling. All of these things will undoubtedly improve in time. Our situation could be much worse. At least our duffel bags arrived on time and were not lost in transfer from the ship as many of us had feared.

The men soon learned to bargain with the civilians for French bread, calvados and eggs in exchange for cigarettes. This barter augmented the GIs' otherwise bland and predictable diet. Pfc. Robert F. Wright, after slogging through the rain and mud, is always hungry. The food, though plentiful, is not satisfying because of so little variety. In his mind he is always thinking about a Texas barbecued beef on bun with a beer. The Army has ordered us not to buy food in Doudeville. The purpose is to conserve food for the French who hardly have enough for their own needs.

Nevertheless, the GIs buy much food from the French who are willing to sell it.

February 12, 1945 - Camp Old Gold, France

This afternoon, Lt. Hayes, Lt. Thode and Pfc. Marder went into Doudeville in search of a shave and a shampoo. We have so little water that there's only enough for drinking and an occasional shave. None of the three had had a shave in three days. When they got into town they found that on Mondays, all shops are closed and that it was clean-up day for all businesses. Pfc. Marder located the local barbershop and in his fluent French convinced the owner to take in three GIs for shaves and shampoos. It was total luxury to be really clean from the neck up. The cost of the shave and shampoo for each man was 14 francs or about 28 cents. They each overcompensated by giving the barber 30 francs and a few cigarettes.

February 16, 1945 - Camp Old Gold, France

We had another sunshiny day today. We wonder how long the good weather will continue but we are hoping for weeks. Lt. Thode is the DO for tonight. He went into Doudeville this morning with Capt. Edwards. There's little to do there, but it's just the idea of going somewhere. Doudeville isn't much to see but it's the best we've got. The names of Lt. Stewart, Lt. Thode and Lt. Prekker were submitted for promotion to the rank of 1st Lt. A recent directive allows for promotion regardless of whether there is a TO&E opening- or not, providing they have 18 months service in grade.

February 17, 1945 - Camp Old Gold, France

This morning, Capt. Edwards came into our tent and announced that he has been appointed to the position of Regimental S-2 and is leaving us to our happy selves. For a second time, I was designated as company commander of Co. M, having served for several weeks at Ft. Benning before Capt. Edwards was sent to the company. I have the company once again and will keep it unless they shove in another Capt. from somewhere. If I get my promotion, I'm sure to keep the company.

Our PX ration came in today. Some of the non-smokers were looking forward to the four candy bars and the package of gum. The six packages of cigarettes will extract a price from smokers.

In general, censorship is working very well. Very few families back home have said that anything had been cut out of our letters by the base censor. That's the reason we write on only one side of the page because when the censor cuts something out, he removes both sides of the page.

I am extremely happy and pleased that I have command of the company once again. I'm getting every encouragement from Col. Guthrie which pleases

me no end. In the past we never saw eye-to-eye on everything. I'll keep my fingers crossed that a Capt. is not pushed in on us any time in the near future.

February 18, 1945 - Camp Old Gold, France

Today is Sunday and we carry on the same schedule for the rest of the week, which isn't too strenuous. We had mail call today and several of the men were greatly disappointed. Somehow this consignment of mail had been thoroughly soaked. Most of the letters were so washed out they were difficult to read. A few of the very unlucky ended up with blank pages.

Everyone wrote home to ask the family to quit using washable ink and to go back to permanent ink. A letter was too valuable to be lost because of the ink. It's great to be commanding the company again. Capt. Edwards didn't want to be a company commander. He wanted to be a major. That fact alone adds to my confidence.

February 19, 1945 - Camp Old Gold, France

We are now operating on a training schedule and will be a little busier than usual. Maybe the big brass thought we were getting too settled. Our weather continues to be very good. It hasn't rained for several days and our tents are fairly dry. Capt. Edwards has left the company and we're now one Officer short of TO&E. We had fried chicken for evening mess but it was terribly tough. There were several remarks about the chickens having walked from California. Even though tough, it was an excellent change of pace and much appreciated. Our chow has been excellent considering everything. We had the opportunity today to send out some of our ODs. Many of us have been wearing the same shirt for three weeks and they were getting excessively ripe. Most of our flashlight batteries

February 20, 1945 - Camp Old Gold, France

The company took a long hike of about 12 miles this morning and several of the men have developed sore feet. News of what is happening is pretty scarce and we keep doing the same old training exercises. Monotony is supposed to be one of the worst evils for troops overseas and now we can see why. No one is especially eager to go into combat, yet the troops get very tired just sitting around. Many of us consider combat preferable to the monotony. After the noon mess we were able to get a new issue of "Stars and Stripes." The war news looks much better. We get the "Stars and Stripes" daily. We don't get so much news from the United States but we do get all the big war events in concentrated form. There are some engineering units here at Camp Old Gold that have between two and a half and three years overseas service. They are waiting for rotation back to the

States although very little rotation is actually taking place. There is a special Officers' Candidate School now operating in Paris. This school takes officers from other branches of the service and converts them to infantry officers. There must be a lot of unhappy souls in the infantry by now. Most of us expect and hope the war in Europe will end within a month. Only an extremely die-hard effort by the Krauts could extend it much longer.

February 21, 1945 - Camp Old Gold, France

We held field exercises all day today, and tonight we participated in an infiltration maneuver. It was a very long and very tiring day.

February 22, 1945 - Camp Old Gold, France

This has been an easier day than yesterday. We got our same old PX package today and the trading between the smokers and the non-smokers is going full blast. The improvised lanterns are being used more and more and candles are being saved for emergencies. The last of the flashlight batteries are just about dead. The most disturbing news is that our coal ration has been cut off as of today. We are all hoping the weather will suddenly warm up. The rain has not started again and we will keep fairly warm as long as we get some sunshine every day. There is a rumor that an outside movie will be shown tonight. It will be our first movie since our eleven day journey onboard ship.



Photo from History of the 71st Infantry Division

The Division received a surprise visit from General Eisenhower. Luckily, one of the stops with his entourage was the 3rd Battalion, 14th Infantry, which, of course, included Co. M. We had no briefing on the General's schedule and did not know if or when he might visit the Co. M area. To cover all bases, I stationed myself at the head of the company street and had Lt. Robinson positioned up at the end of the street near the latrine just in case the general's group should come in by the back entrance. At the last minute, I received word to report to Battalion Hq. on the double. The company commanders were lined up, Hq.

Co. through M. The general came to the battalion command area where all company commanders had been assembled. The division photographer was there for a picture. The picture he took is shown in the bound volume, "The History of the 71st Division." Shown in the picture are General Eisenhower, our Division Commander General Wyman and the backs of Lt. Col. Paul Guthrie, 3rd Battalion Commander, and Major Samuel Campanella, Executive Officer, 3rd Battalion. I was standing immediately to the left of the photographer and behind Lt. Col. Guthrie, so I got an excellent look at General Eisenhower but did not get the opportunity to speak to him. The questions to Lt. Col. Guthrie were predictable, "Are your men battle ready?" "Is morale high?" "Are you full strength?" All of which received a snappy, "Yes, Sir." In less time than it takes to tell it, General Eisenhower was on his way elsewhere.

I had to work until very late last night. Today has been constant training exercises. Because of the heavy work schedule, I eat like a horse. Lt. Stewart is actually gaining weight, which is hard to believe. I've gained a little. The food is very good but I do wish we would get less Spam, mutton and goat meat. All the mess needs to pep up the food is a big supply of Tabasco sauce.

February 23, 1945 - Camp Old Gold, France
Everyone was colder than the devil today. Not all of the tents could afford a fire and those who did had only a very small one. We are about out of fuel and we don't know when we will get more. There was no outdoor movie last night but maybe it will be rescheduled for tonight. Our troops all stayed in the company area today. It's not like the big brass to let us loaf around for too long.

Our pyramidal tent stoves burned charcoal and wood when available and when not, we scrounged for wood. This evening our group went out into the nearby line of woods and cut down a tree. While we were finishing up the job, the French landowner showed up in a total rage. He was furious. That we had not realized was that nearly every tree in Europe had been hand planted for the past 500 years. This became more evident when we got further into Germany. Whole forests were seen where the tree trunks lined up in all directions. We did not attempt to pacify the Frenchman and I'm sure he took up his claim with the Reparations Commission later on.

February 24, 1945 - Camp Old Gold, France
Yesterday was too good to be true. Today we took a 20-mile hike and everyone is pretty well pooped out. We will all hit the sack early tonight and will not worry about lights or a fire in the stove.

Our life at Old Gold has degenerated into a series of blistered feet. We're getting a lot of practice with "shanks mare."

When we first got to Camp Old Gold the chow wasn't the greatest, so Cpl. Martin D. Ritz and others were always hungry. When the men were hungry all they could talk about was food. When the mess improved and they finished the meal with a full belly, the conversation always changed to girls. A good mess always had a direct bearing on the after dinner conversation.

February 25, 1945 - Camp Old Gold, France
We had another lazy day today. It's been cold and windy all day; the kind of wind that seems to cut right through you when you are outside the tent. While we were on the march yesterday, regimental supply came by and left the company an allotment of wood for our tent stoves. The trouble is that all of it is green, recently cut wood. We have been having a lot of trouble getting it started and burned, but we did manage to have fires in our stoves which took care of the biting cold outside. Our long hike and maneuver yesterday and last night wasn't too bad as we got back to camp fairly early. However, it was a lot tougher than anything we had to do at Benning.

February 28, 1945 - Camp Old Gold, France
For some of our men the big event of the day was seeing a movie. We used the theater or auditorium in Doudeville. It's an old wreck of a building as compared to our standards for a movie theater. A movie here, if it were being shown in the States, couldn't require a ticket price of over a nickel or a dime at most. The picture was "Bermuda Mystery" with Ann Rutherford. It was old and corny but anything in the line of entertainment goes over big with us. Lt. Thode spent over two hours today trying to build the ultimate kerosene lantern. He used a tomato juice can, various and sundry pieces of tin and a piece of web belting for a wick. After her all his hard work, -the thing smoked like a locomotive going up a steep hill. Too much smoke didn't add to our cleanliness, such as it was.

The news is getting much better. It looks like the Allied drive toward the Rhine river, with the exception of the Cologne area, should be over in about another week. Lt. Thode is flatly predicting that Germany will capitulate when we advance 35 miles beyond the Rhine river. He says that if the Russians begin their push westward again at the same time, that should end the formal fighting.

March 4, 1945 - Camp Old Gold, France

After a morning of camp duty, the clouds began to roll in and bunch up. By the late afternoon, the rain started and it is still raining at bed time.

It's Sunday again. I'm still commanding the company. I feel very good over the fact that the men's morale has improved appreciably. Things are starting to function once again. There's only a few more odds and ends to be cleared up before we will be a first class combat unit. As for my working and worrying, it's still the same as it was at Benning. There's continually a thousand things on my mind, but I like it that way.

March 5, 1945 - Camp Old Gold, France

It rained all night and we are having a little rain this morning. It has gotten much colder today. Earlier this afternoon, with the extra coal ration, everyone had their tent stoves red hot. We had creamed chicken for the evening chow tonight. It tasted pretty good. We are certainly getting plenty to eat but it's beginning to taste the same each meal. Everyone is depressed as there has not been mail call in three days.

The toughest part of getting to bed is to get warm, and comfortable in an army sleeping bag. It takes about fifteen minutes to get everything in place. First, the ODs go underneath because they need a good pressing anyway., Next the blanket goes inside, spaced where it will do the most good. Next the overcoat goes on top. And finally you have to slide inside without messing up the blanket and not knocking off the overcoat. Then you have been asleep for awhile and it has gotten good and warm, someone wakes you to tell you it's time for your two hour guard duty. When you get back from your guard post, frozen stiff, you have to go through the same procedure getting into your sleeping bag. Someday someone will invent a better sleeping bag.

The first week at Camp Old Gold, Co. M spent most of its time in getting organized in new surroundings. Weeks two and three were spent in intensive training exercises, and the fourth and last week was spent on weapon and equipment upkeep and replacement.

March 6, 1945 - Camp Old Gold, France

We had mail call this morning and all the backlogged mail arrived. We were able to compare and it was easy to see that V-mail took nineteen days to arrive whereas airmail only took ten to twelve days at the most. In spite of all the publicity given to V-mail by the APO, the fact remains it is slower than airmail, at least in France. It makes us all quite angry when we read the malarkey about V-mail that they put in the papers. Nearly everyone has written home to stop using V-mail.

The highlight of today was the arrival of our PX packages. In addition to the usual items there was a small pouch of Sir Walter Raleigh pipe tobacco and two razor blades.

Today was a pretty busy day, with training exercises and tomorrow promises to be even more so. The weather was fairly nice today but still uncomfortably cold, dark and gray but no rain. The wind would occasionally howl and we were outdoors all day. Even with strenuous exercise we were cold to the bone most of the day. For some reason, the damp air that accompanies the wind off the North Sea makes us feel much colder than we would at the same temperature back in the States. This has been one hell of a day. Tie were up and started our field training exercise at 0300 this morning. Tie returned to camp at 0800. After noon chow, we were back in the field and did not return until 1800.

March 7, 1945 - Camp Old Gold, France

We now- have our vehicles. I took a ride to several of the neighboring villages today and found them to be very similar to Doudeville. They all have been stripped of worthwhile articles to buy. It will be many months before the economy of France returns to normal.

Several of us have been able to obtain flashlight batteries through the PX, which are most welcome. The temperature and food remain about the same, nothing to write home about.

My work day began at 0330 this morning in preparation for the issuance of our vehicles. It was a very busy day. I was amazed at the efficiency in which the transfer of vehicles could be accomplished, even though we had planned thoroughly for this day.

March 8, 1945 - Camp Old Gold, France

Our training had been completed, all equipment had been checked and rechecked and the company had the feeling that we were ready to do the job that we had been sent to Europe to do. We did not know it at the time, but a division order dated March 3 had been issued for the "planned movement from present area." On March 5, the regiment received this order for implementation on March 9. The time had come to move out.

THE 1985 EUROPEAN REUNION, REVISITED

The brief report (RCN, July 2010) on the First Reunion, leading to the formation of the 71st Division Association, was well received and provoked enough response to justify this follow-up article. As of press time for that issue, we were unable to identify all the participants with assurance, and so that was not attempted. However, as early as 17 August the offer of help was on the way in the form of positive IDs, additional photographs, and notes on the event from Marjorie A. Kordell, widow of Robert F. Kordell (Co I, 5th Inf), followed shortly thereafter by similar offers from Nadine L. Foerster, widow of Donald A. Foerster (Med Det, 2nd Bn, 14th Inf) and by Barbara Vaclav, wife of Andrew Vaclav (Div HQ and HQ Co)

Faced with this unexpected embarrassment of riches, I could see immediately that I had more factual material than I could possibly use in the allotted space of this journal. As a result, I have attempted to tell the story of this adventure (to which I wish I had been invited) using as much of the new information as possible and as many of the new photos as the Editor has space for.

This first "Europe-Revisited" tour was conceived by John V Earle (HQ Co, 4th Inf) and is best described in his open-letter to then-known members of the 71st Division:

"Jan 9, 1985 TO THE 71st DIVISION VETERANS: We would like to hold a reunion of the 71st Infantry Division and the Russian 5th Guards Airborne Division veterans in Steyr, Austria from noon May 7th to noon May 8th, 1985.

This marks the 40th anniversary of our meeting - the farthest East of any Allied land armies during WW-II. The war ended the next day. We would like to make this the official U.S. and Russian commemoration of the end of WW-II and have invited President Reagan and Chairman Chernenko.

"We have been working out the details since last July and hope to have them completed, by March. Cost for a trip from New York to Europe and return for a two week tour should run from \$1200 to 1700 per person depending on the number of veterans we can sign up.

"Please advise if you would like to join us, and by all means contact other 71st Division veterans about this. Just as soon as our plans are set, we will send you the complete details.

Sincerely,

John W. Earle (Special Services Officer, 14th Inf)

P.S. If you do intend to attend, please obtain your passport now."

A second letter to the "troops" three weeks later indicates progress had been made:

"28 January

So far 65 of you have written for information about the Reunion. After forty years and no official association - that is great.

As Bob Brown (Co F, 5th Inf) wrote, 'Please advise if sleeping accommodations exceed that which was available in 1945.'

"As we have no association or funds, I have turned all the travel arrangements over to Pegasus Travel of Merced, CA, who will coordinate airlines and tours. Time is of the essence. They will draw up this tour for us, bearing in mind (our ages and need) for comfortable accommodations for ourselves and wives, at the lowest possible price.

"As Steyr is a small town, we have decided on better accommodations in Linz. We are planning our reunion dinner there the evening of 7 May 1985. We will proceed to Steyr on 8 May for commemorative services on V.E. Day at 11:00 AM. Some of you have indicated that you will make (independent) arrangements and will meet us for period of 7 May to 8 May.

"You may have read in the papers about the VE Day 40th Anniversary ceremonies being a touchy subject. Our Reunion should solve that problem. Let us join together and make our accomplishment of 40 years ago a truly significant world event.

John T. Earle.

"An annotated roster shows that a total of 20 veterans elected for the full trip, and with wives and children gave a total of 32. The nine veterans who made other plans accounted for 15 persons in all, for a total of 47 who attended the services in Linz and Steyr on 7 and 8 May 1985.

Excerpts from the travel diary of Don Foerster give an authentic feel for the occasion:

"May 7 - Linz, Austria

Joined the tour at the Novotel this evening. Saw a 71st Division patch and a 14th Infantry pin. Met John Earle and others from various regiments and companies. One other Medic from the 5th. Talked over old times - a very

congenial bunch. 'Had group pictures taken and saw old pictures and memorabilia. Two Austrians playing guitar and accordion provided entertainment. After dinner, John gave a short speech and expressed the reason for the reunion 'To celebrate peace and not anyone's victories.' It was well received. Vets I talked to seemed to be for President Reagan's planned visit to German Waffen SS graves at Bitburg. No hard feelings remain. John brought a bottle of champagne he 'liberated' from Speyer in 1945. I remember the Speyer champagne binge and how hard the MPs worked to round it up. After a near-calamity, when a waiter tripped carrying the tray of shot glasses, toasts were made and all the vets had a taste."

May 8 Steyr, Austria

Rejoined the tour at the City Hall. The Mayor welcomed us and related how Steyr was 40 years ago. He was a youngster but remembers the Russians across the Enns River that divides the city. John gave a very good speech. Each Vet received a beautiful book of Steyr, a dry flower arrangement for each wife and a stick-pin with Upper Austria's emblem for everyone. We walked to the Marienkirche for a church service and then to the Restaurant Mader for lunch. Several leading citizens were seated among us. We met Ernie Ralletta, an engineer at the Daimler factory. He fought on the Russian front, was wounded and then sent to France where he became a POW of the English at Normandy. After lunch, the tour left for home. Have really enjoyed my time with them.

May 9 Steyr and Neuhofen - We have stayed another day. Drove a few km to Neuhofen today. Were we had our Aid Station (2nd Bn, 14th Inf) in the town pharmacy when the war ended. The past few days have brought back many memories."

Among the submitted material were 16 photographs from the festivities of both Linz and Steyr, some of which illustrate events from the Foerster Diary entries.

For example, the two Austrian musicians appear with their guitar and accordion in Figure 3., along with an unidentified folk-music fan. Figure 4. shows the strolling players entertaining at a crowded dinner table, with "pictures and memorabilia" pinned to the wall. Figures 5. and 6. are in celebration of the celebrated bottle (it looks like a magnum) of "Pommery & Greno - 1934 - French Sekt/Champagne veuve Pommery, Brut, Reims", probably worth between 4 and 5 figures on Craig's List today. Figure 8. "The Chicken Dance" as performed (clockwise from the left) by Harry Bagon, Mary Gilbert, Marjorie Kordell and Stacey Klimszak: More Gemuetlichkeit at Linz is seen in Figures 9, 10, and 11.

Moving on to Steyr the next day, they were received at the Rathaus by Burgermeister Heinrich Schwarz and other dignitaries (Figure 12.) and enjoyed a lunch as guests of the city at the Hotel Mader restaurant (Figure 13.) And, finally, one of the most satisfying things of all, finding something you actually remember from 40-years ago: (Or 50, or 65, its all receding too fast: LTK)



Fig 1. Group photo of 71st veterans at the Novotel, Linz, Austria, 7 My 1985.

Back Row: (l-r) Charles E Jordan, Co E, 14th Inf), Kenneth A Hall, (A-T Co, 66th Inf), Charles T O'Brian (Co L, 66th Inf), Harry L Sears (Co H, 14th Inf), Steve Malancon (Co G, 14th Inf), Gerald Herskowitz (Hq Btry, 564th FA), Donald A Foerster (2Bn Med Det, 14th Inf), James J Pentland (Co D, 14th Inf), Stacy Klimczak (71st Div Band), Peter Falcone (Co H, 5th Inf), Andrew Vaclav (Div Hq and Hq Co), Benton Wood (Co L, 5th Inf), James V Aparo (Cannon Co, 5th Inf), Harold F Long (Co G, 66th Inf), Robert F Kordell (Co I, 5th Inf), Harold B Gatslick (1Bn Hq Co, 14th Inf), Robert E Johnson (Co D, 14th Inf)

Front Row: JohnW Earle(Hq CO, 14th Inf), Grant C Phillips (Co C, 14th Inf), Roger R Godfroy (Co I, 14th Inf), Robert H Brown (Co F, 5th Inf), Stuart A Olson (Co H, 5th Inf), William N Kasson(Co K, 66th Inf), Harry Bagon (1Bn Hq Co, 66th Inf), Robert L Lamb (3Bn Hq CO, 14th Inf), John W Williams (3Bn Hq CO, 5th Inf)

Not in the photo are John A Gilbert (1Bn Hq Co, 14th Inf), Robert J McClarry (Co G and Hq Co, 14th Inf), Leland J Winger (Co A, 5th Inf), and Ross Wurm (2Bn Hq Co Med Det, 5th Inf).



Fig. 2. Ladies of the 71st attending (l-r): Patricia Sears, Helen Phillips, Irene O'Brian, Marie Brown, Edna McClarry, Tracy (Johnson) Garcia, Beverly Winger, Mrs Gerald Herskowitz with sons Michael and Ricky, Ruth Falcone, Barbara Vaclav, Louise Aparo, Nadine Foerster, Evelyn Olson, Mary Gatslick, Helen Williams, Ruthann Earle, Marjorie Kordell,
Not in the photo are Mary and daughter Kathryn Gilbert



Fig. 3. Authentic Alpine Music at the Novotel, Linz, 7 May 1945



Fig. 4. Entertainment at the Novotel



Fig. 6 Toastmaster John Earle presenting the bottle, liberated in Speyer, Germany in late March, 1945.



Fig. 7. Toasts were made, and all had a taste



Fig. 9. Doing the Chicken Dance! More wine! More wine!

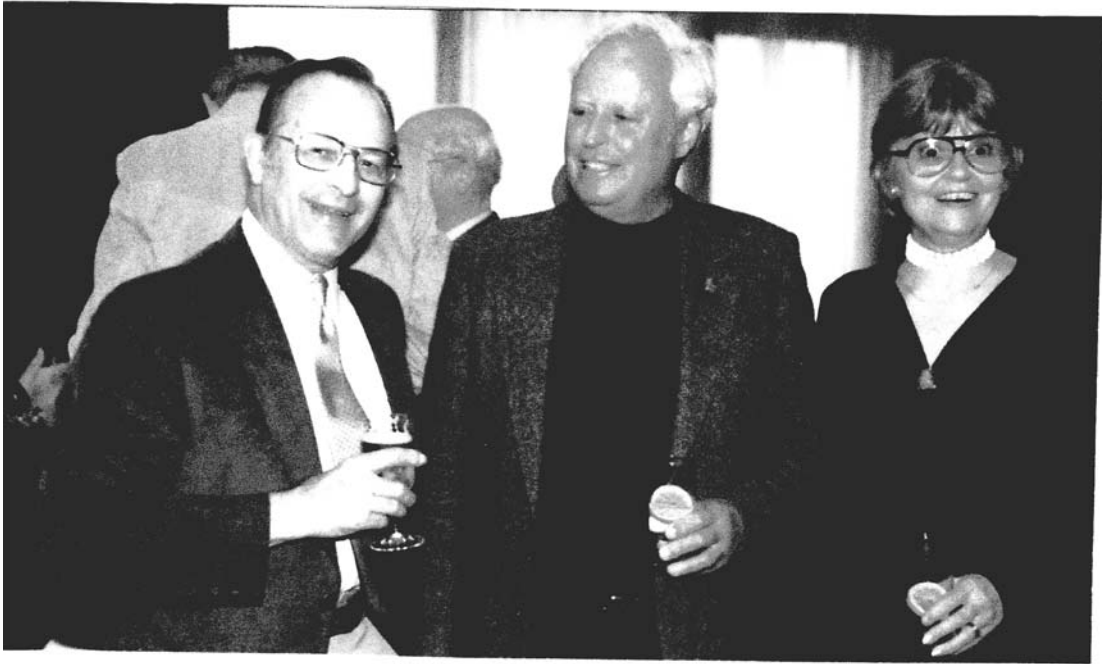


Fig. 10. Bill Kasson with John and Ruthann Earle, Linz, 7 May 1985



Fig. 11. Mary Gilbert, Barbara and Andy Vaclav, Roger Godfroy behind.



Fig. 12. Reception Committee at the Rathaus, Steyr, 8 May 1985. Smiling John Earle at left, Mayor Schwarz and lady translator at photo center



Fig 13. Round-table Lunch at the Hotel Mader, Steyr.
From left: Bob and Marjorie Kordell, Helen and John Williams, Ruthann Earle. Edna and Robert McClarry, Herr G. Veltliner (local citizen)



71ST INFANTRY DIVISION

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Fig. 14. Off to try to find a spot they remembered from 1945. (l-r) Pete Falcone, Jim Aparo, Stuart Olson, Harry Bagon, Lee Winger, Stacy Klimczak

Even though this was a small event in terms of attendance, it was to have major outcomes. Whatever prospect there was for making this a larger international event did not materialize. A margin notation on the submitted material reads: "Russians were invited – none attended," Nevertheless, by 15 August 1985 a letter "To all Veterans of the 71st Division" went out with the Red Circle symbol and "71st Division Association" name. It featured a small vignette of the Fig. 1 photograph. President Bill Kasson described the Linz-Steyr experience and announced that "During the reception at Linz we conducted a short business meeting at which we reorganized the 71st Division Association (formerly the 71st Division Society). A Board of Officers was selected and plans were made to begin contacting former members of the Division for membership in the Association.." At the time some 200 had submitted their \$5.00 dues to Secretary-Treasurer Ken Hall, and the First Annual Reunion was announced to be in Colorado Springs in 1986. We were off – and running!

(My sincere thanks to Marjorie Kordell, Nadine Foerster, and Barbara Vaclav for their interest and contributions that made this historical report possible. LTK)