



Santa Fe Express

"DIVISIONNAIRE"



35th INFANTRY DIVISION

www.35thInfDivAssoc.com

The 35th Divisionnaire USPS 700-160

JULY-AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2021

NUMBER THREE

Message from Commanding General Blaylock

The 35th ID participated in Warfighter 21-05 this past month of June. To put it mildly, I am extremely proud of the performance of the Division! The team gelled and worked together to ensure we succeeded collectively. I could see and watch the pride of the unit grow as we maneuvered through the experience.

It was great to hear comments like, "The wet gap crossing (think "river crossing") was performed to standard and was one of the best I have seen" were heard coming out of the event. The unit put forth extreme effort and ran through the tape at the end. I witnessed some disappointment when the simulation stopped during a fire mission and Soldiers were unable to acknowledge battle damage from the effects! This was definitely a sign of the motivation and pride the unit took in accomplishing the mission.

Throughout the exercise, I witnessed Soldiers going above and beyond to ensure success for the unit. Soldiers arrived early when gaps were identified with communication systems and invested countless hours to get them up and running. Analysts went the extra mile to ensure data was being pushed to other sections for targeting. Logisticians integrated with our Sustainment Brigade to work through problems with convoy movements and throughput. Other units from Kansas and Missouri came to our aid manning entry control points, supporting a mayor cell and helping increase capabilities of the Maneuver Enhancement Brigade. This enabled us to be much



more successful in our training. As people associated with the Division, you should be proud of the efforts of your unit. They lived up to the lineage set forth by our predecessors as they won the day!

The new armory is ready and waiting for furniture to arrive. We are hopeful that it will arrive prior to the conference in October. We are learning patience through the process!

The 35th Infantry Division now sets our planning efforts toward Operation Spartan Shield and our deployment in 2022. More to follow as we prepare for our mobilization.

Win the Day! Santa Fe!
MG Will Blaylock

35th Division Association 103rd Annual Conference Oct. 8-10, 2021

at Airport Hilton, 8801 NW 112th St., Kansas City, Mo
Registration form is on page 12. Please join us!

President's Message

*Association President
LTC (Ret) Ron Boyer*

Dear 35th ID Association Members – I hope everyone had a wonderful and safe Independence Day holiday. Two hundred and forty-five years ago, the Second Continental Congress meeting in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania formally adopted the Declaration of Independence. Prior to this, citizen Soldiers had been fighting only for their rights as subjects of the British crown. With the adoption of the Declaration of Independence, these citizen Soldiers were now fighting for their freedom and independence. The Revolutionary War ended on the 4th of September 1783 and the United States gained its independence from British rule.

These citizen Soldiers built a legacy that still exists today. Patriots who have defended the ideals put forth in the Declaration of Independence and our Constitution: the belief that we are all created equal and endowed with unalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

I am writing to you on the 5th of July. Seventy-seven years ago, on the 5th of July 1944, the 35th Infantry Division began landing on Omaha Beach. The Division spent the next 13 months liberating cities and towns across Europe from the brutal Nazi regime. Many Division Soldiers paid the ultimate sacrifice providing the opportunity for the same freedoms guaranteed to us by the citizen Soldiers of the Revolutionary War. As we head into summer, it is important to remember the sacrifices our citizen Soldiers made for our freedoms.

The 35th Infantry Division recently completed Warfighter 21-05 in preparation for their deployment. Approximately 200,000 Soldiers are deployed throughout the world today. Citizen Soldiers continue to support operations overseas and domestically. The protection of the freedoms that so many have sacrificed for continues today.

Enjoy the summer and stay safe. Fall will be here before we know it. The Association conference and dining out are scheduled for October. We are looking forward to seeing as many of you there as possible. Take care. God bless you and your families. Santa Fe.



Deadline for the Next Issue of the Santa Fe Express is 7 September, 2021

Please send your favorite reunion stories
and pictures to share.



This edition of the Santa Fe Express is courtesy of the
**The Breidenthal-Snyder Foundation
& 35th Div. Assoc. Operating Fund**
Please consider sponsoring the next edition.



The 35th Divisionnaire (USPS 700-160)
Postmaster send address changes to Secretary, 35th Division Association, P.O. Box 5004, Topeka, KS, 66605. Second class postage paid at Horton, Kansas 66439.
Printed at Horton, Kansas, Published quarterly at 133 West 8th St., Horton, Kansas by the 35th Division Association.
Send all stories, notices, obituaries, photographs, etc. to 35th Division Assn., P.O. Box 5004, Topeka, KS 66605

- Division Association**
"FOR ALL 35TH DIVISION - PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE"
- President:**
LTC (R) Ron Boyer
- 1st Vice President**
COL (R) Calvin Warrem
- 2nd Vice President**
COL(Ret) Geoffrey Lanning
- 3rd Vice President**
VP COL Paul Waters
- Immediate Past President:**
BG Anthony Mohatt
- Chairman, 35th Museum Fund**
MG (Ret) Jack Strukel, Jr.
- Executive Treasurer:**
COL (Ret) Robert D. Bloomquist
- Executive Secretary:**
COL (R) Geoffrey Lanning
- Chairman, 35th Assn Hall of Fame**
BG (Ret) Ed Gerhardt
- Chaplain:**
Chaplain LTC John Potter
- Historian:**
Richard J. O'Brien
Roberta Russo
COL(Ret) Dirk Christian
- Sergeant-at- Arms:**
CW4 (Ret) Carl Bush
CSM (Ret) Dale Putman
- Judge Advocates:**
COL (Ret) Angelo P. Demos
- Outreach Committee:**
Murray Leff, Chairman
Mike Ven

Executive Committee
James Graff, Kathryn Frantz, Lloyd Frey, Paula Evans Baker, Victoria Frisenda, Holli Harwell, Patricia Faulkner Harwell, Marilyn Bowers Jensen, CSM (RET) William Luse, Judy Bradford, MG (Ret) Wayne Pierson, Ben Weber, Margaret Fenstermacher, CSM Tim Newton, Pat Cook, MG (Ret) John E. Davoren, Curtis Cook, Marilyn Smith, COL Chris Mickan, BG (Ret) Robert Windham, MAJ Matthew Hapke, COL (Ret) Robert Dalton, COL (Ret) Steve Pierce, SGM (Ret) Lynn Holt,
**All Assn Office Holders.

35th Division Association
PO Box 5004
Topeka, KS 66605
913-772-8130

A Note Of Thanks

The 2nd Annual Santa Fe Division Militaria Showa was held Saturday, June 19 at VFW Post 1650 in Topeka, Ks. The fund raiser from G Co, 137th Infantry, 35th Division Living History Association, (our awesome re-enactors and Honorary Color Guard) raised \$2,000 from the show with all proceeds being donated to the 35th Infantry Division Association.
A special thanks to G Co, 137th Infantry, 35th Division Living History Association for the \$2000.00 donation from their fundraiser. For those that haven't attended a reunion for a while, these re-enactors provide an amazing military display and provide the honors of our Color Guard.



NEW LIFE MEMBERS 2021

E4/Spec Jason L Grof
COL Paul A Waters
BG Kevin A Fujimoto
Jason M Inskeep
Nichole E Inskeep
SSG (R) Mark T Schmidt
Caitlin Oslugi

Comments from Executive Secretary
COL(R) Geoffrey Lanning
Executive Secretary
35th Division Association Conference and Hall of Fame Ceremony
We will be conducting the association conference and hall of fame induction 8-10 October 2021 at the Airport Hilton Hotel at MCI. The event will include the general membership meeting, the Hall of Fame Induction for the 2020 and 2021 selections and the 35th Division Dining Out. The manager assures us that the activities planned can be conducted safely with adequate separation for all participants. Hope to see you all there.

Send all photos, stories, obituaries, etc. for the Divisionnaire to:
35th Division Association,
PO Box 5004,
Topeka, KS 66605

CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Send all correspondence relative to change of address to Secretary, 35th Division Association, P.O. Box 5004, Topeka, KS 66605. Be sure to include old and new address (with new ZIP number) and 35th Div. unit.
NOTICE: Membership dues for the 35th Division Association are \$25.00 per year. This includes your yearly subscription to the 35th Divisionnaire paper which is published quarterly. Make checks payable to the 35th Division Association and mail to Secretary, 35th Division Association, P.O. 5004, Topeka, Kansas 66605.

Donor Appreciation

Oct 2020 - July 2021

All donations are appreciated. Unless asked not to, we will publish your gift as our way of thanking you. If we missed your name or did not send you a receipt, please let us know. You can contact the 35th Association by email, 35divassn@gmail.com or the treasurer at bbloom843@aol.com.

Donors \$5000 and up
*BG(R) Jack Strukel, Jr (Museum Support Fund)
Donors \$3000 and up
*The Breidenthal-Snyder Foundation
Donors \$2000 and up
*G Co. 137th Infantry, 35th Div. Living History Assn., Joe Taylor (Op Expenses)

Donors \$500-\$600
*James G Graff (Op. Expenses, Museum Op. Expenses, Hall of Fame, Conf. Sponsor, in recognition of James G Graff from his family)

Donors \$300-\$400
*LTC (R) Ricky Dodson (Op. Expenses, Museum Op. Expenses, in recognition of COL (R) Ron Sheldon)

Donors \$200-\$300
*COL (R) Roger Aeschliman (Conf. Sponsor, Op. Expenses)
*Paula Baker (Op. Expenses, Museum Op. Expenses)

*PFC (R) Ceo E Bauer (Op. Expenses, Museum Op. Expenses, in recognition of SGT Max Middleswart, KIA)
*Judith Bradford (Op. Expenses)
*COL (R) Angelo Demos (Op. Expenses)
*COL (R) Geoff Lanning (Op. Expenses, Museum Op. Expenses)
*MAJ Robert O Paoli (Op. Expenses, Museum Op. Expenses)
*Roberta Russo (Op. Expenses)
*COL (R) Cal Warrem (Op. Expenses, Hall of Fame)

Donors \$150-\$199
*COL Larry Hahn (Op. Expenses)
*LTC (R) David A Hruska (Conf. Sponsor, in recognition of Rusty Elliott)

Donors \$100-\$149
*Scott and Susan Achenbach (Op. Expenses in honor of Carl J Frantz)
*COL Bruce A Becker (Conf. Sponsor)
*Curtis And Pat Cook (Op. Expenses in recognition of Sgt Carl E Rowe)
*LTC (R) Ricky Dodson (Op. Expenses)
*Martin H Duehring (Conf. Sponsor)
*CAPT John H Evers (Op. Expenses, in recognition of 1st SGT Ed Young, and CAPT Maurice Knott)
*Carol Lynne Freeman (Museum Op. Expenses, in recognition of Carol John Freeman)
*BG (R) Ed Gerhardt (Conf. Sponsor)
*Bruce A Hawkins (Op. Expenses, Museum Op. Expenses, in recognition of Captain Arthur N Getz)
*COL (R) Ben Mirtz (Museum Op. Expenses)
*Jackie L Moore (Op. Expenses in honor of James E Moore Jr.)
*MG Mike Navrkal (Conf. Sponsor)
*Ronald John Paskey (Museum Op. Expenses, in recognition of Joseph M Paskey, KIA)

*Pamela C Thomsen (Op. Expenses, in recognition of PFC John Pergolizzi, KIA)
*COL (R) Ron Winchell (Conf. Sponsor)

Donors \$50-\$99
*Marjorie Bullock (Op. Expenses, Museum Op. Expenses, Hall of Fame)
*Dr. Ronald Cobb (Op. Expenses)
*Rosemary Corbett (Op. Expenses, Museum Op. Expenses, in memory of 1st LT Martin H Huschka)
*Carl H Crise (Museum Op. Expenses)
*Dennis D Dailey (Museum Op. Expenses, in recognition of Dean W Dailey, WWII)
*M/Sgt Charles E Davis (Op. Expenses)
*COL (R) Butch Dowse (Op. Expenses)
*Arthur Germano (Museum Op. Expenses, in recognition of Arthur Germano, Sr.)

*SPC Jason L Grof (Museum Op. Expenses)
*PFC Bernard Jack Kirsch (Op. Expenses)
*Sue (Sirk) Landaw (Op. Expenses, in recognition of John R Sirk)
*Terry Meinke (Op. Expenses)
*Louise Endres Moore (Op. Expenses, in recognition of Alfred Endres)
*1LT Timothy T Nay (Museum Op. Expenses)
*SGM Pat A Pierson (Op. Expenses, in recognition of CSM Dennis Taylor)
*Ben Weber (Op. Expenses)
*Mark and Peggy Weddle (Op. Expenses, Museum Op. Expenses)

Donors up to \$49
*PFC Joe Ayres (Op. Expenses)
*Barb Bryson (Op. Expenses, in recognition of Bob Granger)
*LTC Leslie Chambers (Op. Expenses for CPL Leonardo B Coppola)
*Jose A Coppola (Op. Expenses)
*Doris E Davis (Op. Expenses)
*COL (CH) Gary D Gilmore (Op. Expenses)
*Kathy Graff Esker (Museum Op. Expenses)
*John Harakal (Op. Expenses, in recognition of Joseph Toth)
*Diana D Hardison (Museum Op. Expenses)
*COL William David Jenkins (Op. Expenses)
*LTC Michael T Kennedy (Op. Expenses)
*PFC Javier E Ledesma (Op. Expenses)
*Jack Mills (Op. Expenses)
*CSM Howard H McCoy (Op. Expenses)
*SGT (R) Richard O'Brien (Op. Expenses)
*MAJ (R) Stephen B Poge (Op. Expenses)
*M. Eileen Schneider (Op. Expenses)
Museum Op. Expenses

Rev. J. B. Reentz served as Chaplain and received Bronze Star

Like many members of the 35th Infantry Division, Chaplain John H. Reents, was born in a small rural town. Reents was born on October 9, 1901, near Pickrell, Nebraska. For many years, His father, Rev. J. B. Reents, was pastor of Zion Lutheran Church of rural Pickrell.

Chaplain Reents graduated from Wartburg College, Clinton, Iowa, and, in 1926, from Wartburg Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa. On June 27, 1926, he was ordained at the Zion Lutheran Church near Pickrell. He later received a Degree of Divinity from Wartburg College in 1941.

In 1931, during the Great Depression, Chaplain Reents founded a Lutheran church at Filley, Nebraska, and his salary was \$25 per month. On 26 November 1940, he joined the Nebraska National Guard as a chaplain with the rank of Captain. Chaplain Reents served in the 134th Infantry Regiment of the 35th Infantry Division. The 35th Infantry Division was federalized 23 Dec 1940. The 134th Infantry Regiment landed at Omaha Beach on 5 July 1944.

For his actions in France and Belgium from 11 July 1944 to 31 December 1944, Chaplain Reents received the Bronze Star for meritorious service. In the operations around St. Lo, soldiers exhausted by extended and strenuous combat were brought to the rear, where Chaplain Reents spent long hours encouraging the soldiers and tending to their spiritual needs. His efforts assisted in their mental and physical recovery. He also prepared soldiers for battle through lecture and prayer with them.

On 15 December 1944, Chaplain Reents wrote a letter to the Beatrice Newspaper that was published on 7 January 1945. He described looking across a river and seeing Germany for the first time while shrapnel struck a building about 100 yards away. In the letter, he indicated he thought the war was going to end much earlier. He noted that the Germans counterattacked and that Patton’s lines of supply were too long. He stated, “God is the one who has not yet found it proper to give that kind of success to our arms on land, sea and in the air. (For the entire letter go to <http://www.coulthart.com/134/134-ir/reents-j-h.htm>).

While Chaplain Reents was deployed with the 35th Infantry Division, he was promoted to the rank of major on 30 December 1945, although the general order awarding him the Bronze Star listed him as a major.

Until the 134th Infantry Regiment departed for the United States on the Queen Mary after the war’s end on September 5, 1945, the regiment liberated or captured 124 towns. In the process the 134th suffered more than 10,200 casualties including over 1,200 soldiers who were killed in action.

Returning from active duty in 1946, Chaplain Reents was transferred (nominally) from the Nebraska National Guard to the (Officers’ Reserve Corps on 10 October 1945 and held a commission as a reserve officer until 21 November 1947). He rejoined the Nebraska National Guard and was appointed to the permanent rank of major on 9 June 1947. He was promoted to lieutenant colonel on 31 March 1949. He reverted to the rank of major on 1 April 1949 and was promoted back to lieutenant colonel on 8 March 1954.

After World War II, Chaplain Reents became pastor of the Adams, Nebraska

Lutheran Church and resumed his position as pastor at Filley, Nebraska. He served both of those parishes until 1959, and in 1960 the Filley church, alone. The last six years of his pastoral ministry was at the Saint Paul Lutheran Church in Neligh. When he retired in 1966, he returned to Adams.


From 1960 to 1970, Chaplain Reents was chairman of the Service to Military Personnel Committee of the American Lutheran Church. He had served as Nebraska American Legion chaplain, president of the Beatrice Lutheran Hospital Board of Directors, president of the Beatrice Rotary Club, and as a member of the Board of Regents of Wartburg Seminary.

On September 12, 1970, at the age of 68, Chaplain Reents died in Beatrice Nebraska. A life well-lived.



Chaplain Rev. J. B. Reents






35th Division Association

P O Box 5004

Topeka, KS 66605



Membership Renewal/Application,
Donor or Order Form (April 2020)

Name: _____ Rank/Title: _____
(First) (MI) (Last)

Address: _____ City/State/ZIP: _____

E-Mail (Optional): _____ Telephone: _____

Indicate if you wish to receive the “Santa Fe” Paper electronically to save postage _____

Organizations of Service with 35th Div. (69th Bde, 137th, 134th, 320th 161 etc.): _____

Amount Enclosed

Annual Renewal Dues or New Member Annual Dues - \$25.00

New Life Member, Dues for WW II Veterans - \$75.00

New Life Member, Dues for All Others - \$140.00

Donation for 35th Div. Assn Operating Expenses

Donation specified for the 35th Museum Operating Expense

Sponsor Edition of “The Santa Fe Express” - \$1500.00

Hall of Fame Expenses & Reception - \$100 & up

35th Div. Conference Sponsor - \$100 or more

Donation in recognition of _____

DVD – “A Living History of the 35th Inf Div. in WW II”

By Murray Leff -----\$8.00

35th Division Coin \$10.00 (\$12.00 if mailed)

35th Division Lapel Pin----- \$5.00 (\$6.00 if mailed)

(1) Pin of DIV Patch with 35th In Div. written on edge

(2) Pin with DIV Patch only

35th Division Ceramic Mug---\$ 7.00 (*plus mailing)

Patch with “100 years, Santa Fe”

Division colors (flag) with patch in center

Tumblers or stemless wine glasses---\$6.00 (*plus mailing)

(*Mailing cost for glasses an cups: \$8.00 for one, \$10 to mail two)

Total Amount Enclosed

(Make Checks Payable to “35th Div. Association” and Mail to

35th Division Association, P O Box 5004, Topeka, KS 66605)

Payment may be made by PayPal using 35divassn@gmail.com

The 18th Reinforcement Depot and 35th Infantry Division in Roermond, the Netherlands

By Richard van Kessel

Serving as the Personnel Reinforcement Depot for the Ninth US Army, the 18th Reinforcement Depot was stationed in my hometown, Roermond (the Netherlands) from 16 March 1945 until 16 April 1945. One of the divisions attached to the Ninth US Army at that time was the 35th Infantry Division. Combat experienced officers from every division attached to the Ninth US Army served as instructors within the 18th Reinforcement Depot. So there must also have been troops of the 35th Infantry Division serving as an instructor in the 18th Reinforcement Depot in Roermond, or passing through as Reinforcements.

To gather more information about this short period in history is a quest for me several years now. Although the “proof” about the presence of the 35th Infantry Division in Roermond isn’t much at the moment, I still would like to take this opportunity to write this article about the 18th Reinforcement Depot and the 35th Infantry Division in my hometown.

But first a short introduction about the US Army Reinforcement System during World War Two in the European Theater of Operations (ETO).

The General Order No. 62, Headquarters ETO, United States Army, of 10 June 1944, announced the establishment of a Replacement System, ETO, consisting of two commands:

- Ground Force Replacement System, ETO
- Army Air Force Replacement System, ETO

The Ground Force Replacement System, ETO was a command operating directly under the Deputy Theater Commander, Lieutenant General John C. H. Lee, and as the Theater Agency charged with the responsibility for the Replacement System for all units of the Field Forces and Communications Zone.

There were six types of Depots established in the Ground Force Replacement System, ETO:

1. Depots remaining in the UK
2. Staging Depots in the harbors of Le Havre and Marseille (France)
3. Training Depots
4. Retraining Depots
5. Stockage Depots
6. Forward (Army) Depots – These depots were called **Replacement Depots** and

were habitually in support of the army in whose area/zone they were located. Although they were not under the direct command of the concerning Army Commander.

The purpose of a **Replacement Depot** was to provide reinforcements to the Army it supported and provide the necessary training to prepare these reinforcements for the daily life at the front lines. The training consisted of, among other things: combat demonstrations, instructions on how to handle German weapons, how to discover and recognize German mines and how to protect themselves against them. After these trainings had been finished the replacements were assigned to a division.

It was also the task of the Replacement Depot to retrain soldiers who had been fully



Major Cull on our right standing before an 134th Regiment marked car



War damage that hasn't been cleaned up yet



Bischop's College



Tower of the cathedral blown up by the Germans

continued on page 5

recovered from injuries, so that they could return to their own unit as soon as possible. They were also fully equipped again.

A growing psychological reaction against the use of the term “replacement” caused a change. During the month of December 1944 the term “replacement” was changed into “reinforcement” and thus the Replacement Depots were renamed as Reinforcement Depots. All units of the Reinforcement System in the ETO were directed to cease using the term replacement.

One of the most serious problems encountered by the Ground Force Reinforcement Command developed from the shortage of Infantry Rifle Reinforcements at the end of 1944. This became serious in December 1944 and January 1945 during the German Ardennes Offensive. Several measures were taken in response to this. One of the measures was by forming colored combat units.

Organisation Reinforcement Depots:

Headquarters (HQ) & HQ Company Reinforcement Depot
(43 OFF * - 2 WO ** - 181 EM ***)

HQ & HQ Company Reinforcement Battalion (19 OFF - 113 EM)
(4x) Reinforcement Company (5 OFF - 37 EM)

Army Postal Unit plus 2 Finance Units (2 OFF - 34 EM)

Quartermaster (QM) Truck Company (5 OFF - 105 EM)

Finance Disbursing Section (1 WO - 21 EM)

Military Police Company (4 OFF - 97 EM)

Signal Service Organisation (40 EM)

Engineer Service Organisation (3 OFF - 55 EM)

QM Laundry Platoon (1 OFF - 61 EM)

Band

Commanding Officer: Colonel Lorin Solon F.A. (O190917)

Locations 18th Reinforcement Depot, ETO

St Laurent sur Mer, France 21 September 1944 to 23 September 1944

14th Replacement Depot, France 24 September 1944

Fleury en Biere, France 25 September 1944 to 27 October 1944

Brusthem, Belgium 28 October 1944 to 9 November 1944

Tongres, Belgium 10 November 1944 to 15 March 1945

Roermond, the Netherlands 16 March 1945 to 16 April 1945

Münster, Germany 17 April 1945 to 8 May 1945

Units attached to the 18th Reinforcement Depot: Hq & Hq DET, 36th Reinforcement Battalion; Hq & Hq DET, 45th Reinforcement Battalion; Hq & Hq DET, 78th Reinforcement Battalion; Hq & Hq DET, 86th Reinforcement Battalion ; Hq & Hq DET, 97th Reinforcement Battalion; 188th Reinforcement Company; 189th Reinforcement Company; 190th Reinforcement Company; 228th Reinforcement Company; 297th Reinforcement Company; 298th Reinforcement Company; 299th Reinforcement Company; 326th Reinforcement Company; 354th Reinforcement Company; 355th Reinforcement Company; 365th Reinforcement Company; 366th Reinforcement Company; 367th Reinforcement Company; 449th Reinforcement Company; 450th Reinforcement Company; 451st Reinforcement Company; 452nd Reinforcement Company; 455th Reinforcement Company; 456th Reinforcement Company; 457th Reinforcement Company; 872nd Army Postal Unit; 102nd Finance Disbursing Section

18th Reinforcement Depot and 35th Infantry Division in Roermond

My hometown Roermond was liberated on 1 March 1945 and at that moment only 4,000 of the 19,000 inhabitants were still living/hiding in the city. Around 12,000, mainly elderly, women and children had been evacuated by train to the northern part of the Netherlands in February. The remaining part of some 3,000 men had already been deported to Germany to work in the German factories in the end of December. Therefore only a few inhabitants witnessed the first American soldiers of the 15th Cavalry Group to enter the city on the day of the liberation. A few days before the liberation of Roermond, the 15th Cavalry Group was relieved from attachment to the 35th Infantry Division and was now under XVI Corps control.

Later that afternoon, after clearing the town of Herkenbosch, the 2nd platoon of the 35th Reconnaissance Troop entered and passed through Roermond. In Roermond they removed anti-tank obstacles, build one bridge and calling on Dutch civilians to help fill one major anti-tank ditch. By 20.00hrs 2nd platoon was relieved by troops of the 15th Cavalry Group and returned to Herkenbosch.

In the days following the liberation more and more American troops entered Roermond. A big part of the city was in ruins and a lot of anti-tank obstacles attached with mines and booby traps were spread out over the city. This was cleared by Army Engineers, but unfortunately a few inhabitants got wounded or even worse by the mines and booby-traps before the anti-tank obstacles were removed.

Also quartermasters arrived in the city. They came to find housing and suitable locations for the establishment of the 18th Reinforcement Depot which was scheduled to open on 16 March 1945. School buildings, like the Bishop’s College, hotels and other



Munster Church on the background



Information board

buildings in Roermond were used as training facility and for housing the troops. Beside information and education (I&E), there were also special service activities to entertain the troops. Roermond was a busy town again.

During the month of March 1945, the 18th Reinforcement Depot received the 100,000 enlisted and 6,000 officer reinforcements in their existence.

Total reinforcements received and processed during the entire month of March 1945 (Roermond and Tongres): Officers: 594; Enlisted Men: 17,714

Total reinforcements received and processed during the entire month of April 1945 (Roermond and Münster): Officers: 516; Enlisted Men: 19,800

On 17 April 1945 at 12.00hrs the Headquarter of the 18th Reinforcement Depot closed in Roermond and opened in Münster, Germany. At that time the northern part of the Netherlands wasn’t liberated yet and so the evacuees could not return. Roermond turned into a relative quite town again. This lasted until the major part of the inhabitants had returned in May and June.

The pictures used in this article are all coming from a private Photo album of an unknown soldier in one of the Reinforcement Battalions of the 18th Reinforcement Depot. This unknown soldier has mentioned the names of other soldiers in the caption of the relevant pictures, but unfortunately he didn’t mentioned his own name.

The only photographic evidence of a 35th Infantry Division member to be present in Roermond that I know of, is one photo in this album showing three soldiers in front of a car on the Willem II Singel (street in Roermond). The car has the following markings: 134 INF and MP-6 on the front. The patch of the 35th Infantry Division can be seen on the left arm of the Major. According to the caption in the photo album the Major standing on our right should be Major Cull. There was only one Major Cull in the 35th Infantry Division, Major Max E Cull of the 35th Headquarters Company.

Despite I haven’t found a personal account or record of an 35th Infantry Division member in Roermond yet, I hope in the future that something will turn up, but for now this is all.

35th Division and Kansas National Guard in Afghanistan

By BG(Ret) Ed Gerhardt

Now in 2021, as the United States pulls out of Afghanistan after the longest war in U. S. history, it is appropriate to recall the 35th Infantry Division and Kansas National Guard involvement in Afghanistan over the last 20 years.

Embedded Training Teams

Eighteen soldiers from Hqs and Hqs Battery, 35th Division Artillery, were mobilized and sent to Afghanistan in January of 2006. They were assigned as part of an Embedded Training Team that would assist in training the Afghan Army Brigade. The deployment was part of Operation Enduring Freedom. Commanding the team was LTC Michael Slusher, Topeka. They would remain deployed during 2006.

A second contingent, led by MAJ Lon Williams, went to Afghanistan in February, 2006. Their mission was to train the Afghan Army in mechanized infantry tactics using armored personnel carriers.

On Sept. 15, 2006, MSG Bernard L. Deghand, a member of the Hqs and Hqs Company, 35th Infantry Division and a part of the Embedded Training Team, died as a result of small arms fire in a combat action with the Afghan Army, which was known as Operation Mountain Fury. His death occurred during the 2006 35th Div Assn. Conference in Topeka.

Soldiers of the 35th Infantry Division Embedded Training Team returned from their year's deployment in Afghanistan on Feb. 25, 2007. Known as Team Kansas, they had deployed in January of 2006, working with the Afghan Army to support the global war on terrorism. Members of the team were awarded five Combat Infantryman's Badges, two Combat Medic Badges, and four Combat Action Badges, as well as five Meritorious Service Medals for their work in Afghanistan.

They were followed by the third Kansas National Guard Embedded Training Team in April of 2006. Named Team Shocker, the group was drawn from several Kansas National Guard units. The sixteen members of this team were assigned to the 218th Brigade, South Dakota National Guard, and assigned to train the Afghan Army forces. The Kansas soldiers initially reported to Fort Riley, and after 45 days left for Afghanistan for their year-long deployment.

A fourth Embedded Training Team was deployed in 2009, followed by Agricultural Teams designed to assist the Afghans with use of productive agricultural methods.

Regional Corps Advisory Group (RCAG)

A Regional Corps Advisory Group (RCAG), made up of Kansas Guardsmen from several units, deployed to Afghanistan on April 21, 2009. Commanded by COL Vic Braden, later the 35th Division Commander, the group had the mission of serving as advisors to the Afghan military and police. The group returned to Kansas in the spring of 2010.

Agricultural Business Development Teams

Two Kansas National Guard Agricultural Business Development Teams, accompanied by staff from Kansas State University, deployed to Afghanistan to assist this developing country in agricultural efforts in 2009 and 2010.. The first returned in March of 2009, with the second deploying in January 2010. The first was commanded by COL Eric Peck, and the second by COL Mike Dittamo.

The third and fourth Agricultural Business Development Teams were deployed to Afghanistan in 2010 and 2011, with the fourth returning home in September of 2011. Each team was comprised of approximately 60 soldiers, who assisted in building capabilities for increased agricultural production, training and services; food safety; and sustainable agricultural products for the Afghan people. The third team was commanded by LTC Howard Wheeler and the fourth by LTC Russell Richardson.

Unit Deployments

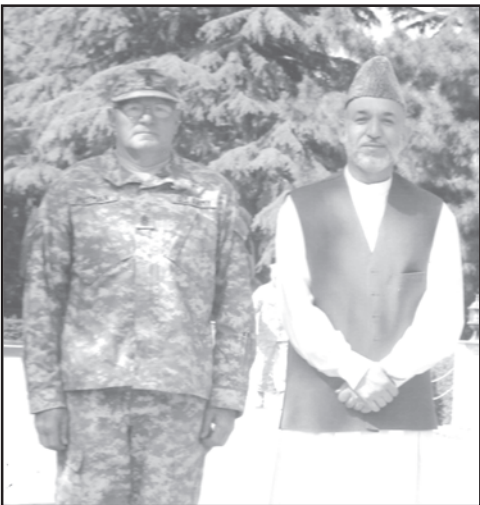
The 169th Corps Support Battalion (2019-20), 105th Public Affairs Det (2005-06), 102d Military History Det (2008-09 & 2012-13), 226th Engr Co (2010-11), and several Aviation units of the Kansas National Guard were also deployed to Afghanistan.



35th Division soldiers provided daily assistance to Afghan farmers.



MSG Bernard Deghand, 35th Division, was killed by small arms fire in September of 2006 while serving as an advisor to the Afghan Army. His death came during the 35th Division Conference in Topeka.



CSM Dale Putman, past 35th Div Assn. president, is shown with Afghan president Hamid Karzai during his tour of duty in Afghanistan.



Guardsmen served as advisors to the Afghan Army and as part of Agricultural Development Teams.



Kansas soldiers also provided assistance in rebuilding the infrastructure of Afghanistan.

60th Engineer Combat Battalion Land Mine Explosion Disaster – October 10, 1944

Submitted by Roberta Russo
The night of October 10, 1944, the 60th Engineer Combat Battalion was laying down a mine field near Ajoncourt, about 18 miles northeast of Nancy, France. Trucks carrying the mines were parked along the river just south of town. At about 11 PM that night one of the trucks exploded, causing another truck and nearby stacks of mines and other ammunition to also explode. Thirty-three men died in that explosion and fourteen were wounded. One man was awarded a Silver Star medal and three were awarded Bronze Star Medals for their efforts to rescue their comrades.

The following is an excerpt from the 60th Engineer Combat Battalion After Action Report for October 1944:

“On the night of 10 October 1944, Company B suffered the loss of 47 men in an explosion of anti-tank mines at Ajoncourt, France. The third and elements of the first platoon were engaged in a night mine laying operation just north of the town. The squad trucks loaded with mines were parked at a point just south of the town and the mines were being fused and unloaded from the trucks and carried to the mine field. At approximately 2300, a terrific explosion from the leading truck which was loaded with mines caused a sympathetic detonation of a nearby truck load of mines and mines stacked on the ground nearby. Approximately 1,500 mines in all exploded. The entire area immediately became an inferno of exploding mines, small arms ammunition and burning vehicles. Intermittent enemy artillery and mortar fire had been falling in this area, but it has never been definitely established whether this or a defective fuse caused the explosion. Eighteen identifiable bodies were found and fifteen men were missing. (Note: The remains of 2 of those originally missing were later found. Thirteen are still MIA.) Fourteen men were wounded and evacuated to aid stations. The night was very dark and there was a heavy fog which made rescue work most difficult, but there were numerous incidents of heroism. Several wounded men pulled wounded comrades from the nearby la Seille river thereby saving their lives.”

T/5 Harry P. Rahn, an aid man from the Medical Detachment, was awarded a Silver Star Medal for gallantry in action. He was accompanying the engineers on this mine laying operation when the explosion occurred. Despite being severely wounded and able to use only one hand, he made his way through an inferno of burning wreckage and administered first aid to fourteen wounded soldiers, then searched the area to ensure none had been overlooked before he permitted himself to be evacuated. Sgt. John L. Garvey, Sgt. Clarence E. Nelson, and Pfc. George J. Wagnis were awarded the Bronze Star for heroic action. All 3 men sustained painful wounds yet as-

sisted others before allowing themselves to be evacuated. Sgt. Garvey rescued one man from the la Seille River and gave first aid to others. Sgt. Nelson walked a distance of one mile to find medical aid men and then assisted in the evacuation of several casualties. Pfc. George J. Wagnis pulled two soldiers from the la Seille River and administered first aid to other wounded men.

Killed in Action

The following 33 men were killed in action by this explosion – the 13 labeled MIA have not yet been recovered and are memorialized on the Tablets of the Missing at the Lorraine American Cemetery in St. Avold, France:

- Pvt Warner C. Aberle
- Pvt Howard A. Binder (MIA)
- Pvt Edward J. Bulin (MIA)
- Pfc Charles E. Clark (MIA)
- T/5 James J. Clark
- T/5 Marshall Digrugilliers
- Pfc Harold P. Eltman
- Cpl John H. Gaulton (MIA)
- Pvt John Goeman
- Pfc Wilbert G. Hofer
- Cpl Jerry J. Krepela (MIA)
- Pvt Anthony A. Laskowski (MIA)
- Pfc Earl J. Leadon
- Pvt Joseph Lombardo
- T/5 Peter P. Macchio
- Pvt William A. Maier
- Pvt Louis A. Morici (MIA)
- Pvt Anthony Nemiccola (MIA)
- Pvt William M. Oster
- Pvt Joseph F. Paletta (MIA)
- Pfc John Pergolizzi
- T/4 Elwood Perkins
- Pvt Elvin Phillips, Jr.
- Pfc Gilbert E. Purdy
- Pvt James F. Rafferty
- Pvt Paul A. Smith (MIA)
- Pfc Leo E. Smolinski (MIA)
- Pvt Joseph P. Twomey
- Pfc Clarence B. VanDeCarr
- Pvt Frank A. Walter
- T/5 Peter H. Wenzel (MIA)
- Pfc Joseph H. Williamson
- Pfc Henry E. Zahradnik (MIA)

Wounded

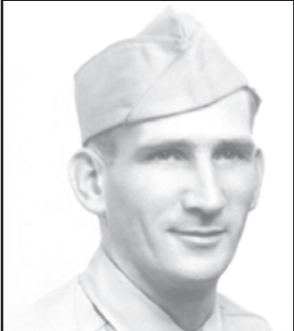
- The following 14 men were wounded in action by this explosion:
- Pvt George H. Seevers
 - Cpl Donald G. Flareau
 - Pvt Dominick Fontana
 - Sgt John L. Garvey
 - Sgt Edward J. Kebba
 - Sgt Clarence E. Nelson
 - Pvt Joel W. Norris, Jr.
 - Pfc William D. O’Neil
 - Pvt Anthony E. Piazza
 - T/5 Harry P. Rahn
 - Pvt Alfred W. Rapp
 - Pfc George J. Wagnis
 - Pfc Fred A. Masters
 - Pfc James W. Webster



Pfc Harold P. Eltman



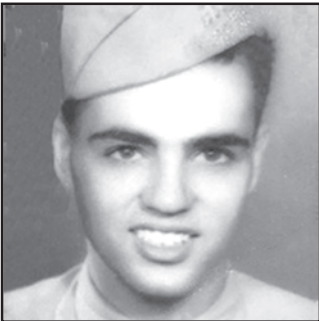
Sgt. John L. Garvey



Pvt Anthony A. Laskowski (MIA)



Pfc Earl J. Leadon



Joseph F. Paletta



Pfc John Pergolizzi



Pvt Elvin Phillips, Jr.



Pfc Gilbert E. Purdy



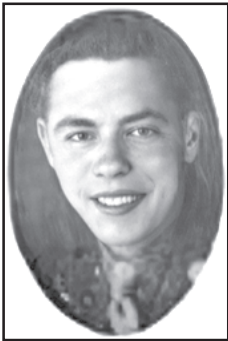
T/5 Harry P. Rahn



Pvt Joseph P. Twomey



Pfc. George J. Wagnis



Pvt Frank A. Walter

Still Missing

Thirteen men are still missing over 75 years after this disaster. The Army has DNA family reference samples for 9 of them but they still need DNA family samples for the following 4 men:
Howard A. Binder (Walla Walla WA),
Edward J. Bulin (Wyandanch NY),
Joseph F. Paletta (New York, NY),
Henry E. Zahradnik (Little Ferry, NJ)
There are 3 Unknown Soldiers buried at the Lorraine American Cemetery in France that are almost certainly casualties from this explosion. We are working with the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency trying to get approval for their disinterment and DNA testing. If you are a family mem-



T/5 Peter H. Wenzel (MIA)



Pfc Joseph H. Williamson

ber or know any family members of these 4 men, please call the U.S. Army Past Conflicts Repatriation Branch at (800) 892-2490 or contact Roberta Russo from the 35th Division Association at (847) 571-4160, email roberta.russo@yahoo.com for more information.

Thacker family shares WWII photos of 35th Infantry

Submitted by Mike H. Ven

Charles Irvin Thacker, from Richmond - Virginia, served with the 35th Infantry Division in WWII. He was attached to the 320th Regiment, Headquarters Company after he was transferred from Company M - 320th Regiment.

A report from January 15, 1945 indicates that he was promoted from PVT to PFC. His unit was in the vicinity of Bastogne, Belgium at that time. He served with HQ company till the end of the war.

Pictures like this are a part of our Division's history. There are not a lot of official pictures available so it's always a pleasure to see pictures from personal collections.

Most of the pictures should be post battle of the bulge. Some of them seem to be from in Germany between March and May 1945

Dennis Thacker, grandson of Charles Irvin Thacker, provided these pictures in honor of his grandfather and all who served, we salute you!





35th Normandie group hold ceremony at the monument to the 35th Division to honor the liberation of Mortain

International Liaison Committee Column

July 7, 2021

Europe is gradually reopening from quarantine under conditions as varied as the countries themselves.

Outdoor ceremonies were easier to arrange, such as the event at Mortain organized by the 35th “Santa Fe” Normandie group, on June 5, 2021. The ceremony was restricted to a few members of the Association. The Normandie group is already planning for the 80th Anniversary of D Day.

The only WWII museum in Lorraine reopened May 22 and will be open until the 30th of October. It is free to viewers on Saturday afternoons and some Sundays. The museum, south of Nancy, France, is sponsored by the association of l’Espace de Memoire Lorraine 1939-45. Among the emphases this year are the bombing of Vezelise in 1940 and Resistants.

The 35th Division Association lost a good friend this month at the passing of Roger Baland from Lutremange, Belgium. He was 60 years old. Roger was the founder and curator of the Monument to the 35th Division at Lutremange. See his obituary elsewhere in this issue of the Santa Fe Express. A memorial brick will be installed in the 35th Division Museum in his honor.

Memorial Day services at the U.S. Military cemeteries in Europe this year were very restricted, and available for viewing by the public on social medial. Richard von Kessel took his young son, Dean, to visit the gravesite of Nebraska City hero, Donald Giles, when the Margraten Cemetery partially opened. Richard has adopted Donald Giles’ grave, been to the United States to visit with Donald’s family, seen where he lived and toured the schoolhouse where Donald attended school. Now Richard is teaching his two sons, the Duty to Remember.

Paula Evans Baker, daughter of Pvt. Richard H. Evans, F-134-35, KIA 9/30/44 paulap5@cox.net

Marilyn Bowers Jensen, daughter of PFC Rex M. Bowers, C-134-35, KIA 01/25/45 mbowersjensen@msn.com

Col. (retired)Thomas Arnhold, 35th Infantry Division, arnholdtom@gmail.com



AT RIGHT: Dean von Kessel visits grave of Donald Giles of Nebraska City at U.S. Military Cemetery at Margraten



35th Division Hall of Fame Nominations Sought

Members of the 35th Division Assn., as well as others, are encouraged to submit nominations for the 35th Division Hall of Fame for induction in 2021. Nominators must sign the nomination form and provide data for future contacts.

At this time there are only seven (7) carryover nominations from this year for consideration next year..

Three things are required for the nomination:

1. The completed Hall of Fame Nomination Form below.
2. A separate page(s) biography of the nominee giving military service and emphasizing what the nominee did in service in the 35th Division to merit induction into the Hall of Fame.
3. A photo of the nominee

Supporting documents such as copies of award citations, listings of military awards, copies of his/her service records, letters of support, etc. are optional.

The 2021 class to be inducted will be inducted at the Annual 35th Div Assn Conference in 2021.

Send nominations to **BG Ed Gerhardt, Chairman, 35th Hall of Fame Committee, 125 SE Airport E. Drive, Topeka, KS 66619**, so as to arrive not later than 1 August 2020.

Hall of Fame Nomination Form

Rank/Title of Nominee:

Name of Nominee:

Recipient of : Medal of Honor: ☐

Dist. Svc Cross: ☐

Address of Nominee (if living):

Name & Address of Next of Kin (if deceased):

Nominee Date of Birth:

Nominee Date of Death:

Nominator Name:

Nominator E-Mail:

Nominator Address:

Nominator Telephone:

Museum of the Kansas National Guard

Home of the 35th Division Museum

125 SE Airport E. Drive

Topeka, KS 66619

785 862-1020 or office@kngmuseum.org

Museum Donor Form for 2021

Name: _____ Rank: _____ Telephone: _____

Address: _____ E-Mail: _____

(Street) (City/State/Zip)

Payment: Cash/Check/Credit Card

Credit Card

Number _____ Expiration: _____ Security Code _____ Billing Zip Code: _____

_____ Perpetual Sustaining Membership (w/Free Interior & Exterior Bricks)

\$1200 or \$120 per year for 10 years

(Inscription - 3 lines, maximum of 14 letters/spaces per line)

_____ 2021 Major Donor Club Donation - \$100 or more (Name posted in Lobby)

_____ 2021 Annual Membership - \$25 per year (Name Posted in Conference Room)

_____ Contribution for Museum Operations - Amount: _____

_____ Interior Brick - \$200 (w/Free Exterior Brick)

(Inscription - 3 lines, maximum of 14 letters/spaces per line)

For 35th Division Wall? ☐ Yes ☐ No

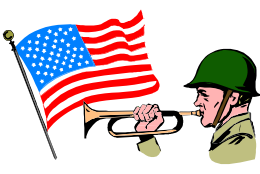
_____ Exterior Patio Brick - \$50

(Inscription - 3 lines, maximum of 14 letters/spaces per line)

For Which Unit Area? _____

(All Who Donate or Purchase Bricks Receive a 2021 Museum Coin)

Taps



Ronald Charles Herring

Ronald Charles Herring of Winchester, Kansas, a retired Jefferson County heavy equipment operator and National Guard member, died peacefully surrounded by his family on June 5th,

2021 at the age of 74. Ron is survived by his wife, Lorraine of 47 years; his children, Carl (Jennifer) of Mayetta, Jason of Winchester, Nick (Kim) of Meriden, Robert (Tammy) of Liberty, MO, and Judee Cordell (Damian) of Winchester; as well as 12 ¼ grandchildren, and 2 great-grandchildren. He is also survived by 3 siblings, Linda (Shaver), Merle, and Glen. He



was preceded in death by his parents Floyd and Annie (Metzger) and his brothers, Ralph, Lee and Roger.

Ron was born in Rock Creek, Kansas on December 31, 1946. He graduated from Valley Falls High School in 1964 and continued work on the family farm. Ron was drafted into the United States Army in November 1966, where he served 2 years overseas in Germany. He later continued his service in 1981 by joining the Kansas Army National Guard where he served 32 years, including a deployment to Iraq in 2004.

He met the love of his love, Lorraine Sieve, while partaking in the other love of his life: ice cream. Ron and Lorraine married on November 24th, 1973 and went on to have 5 children.

Ron continued the family farming tradition throughout his life. After returning from his service in Germany, he worked at Valley Implement before starting his own farm in Valley Falls in the 1970s. He never lost that love of the land, and continued plowing and tilling for local communities throughout Northeast Kansas through the spring of 2021. Ron transitioned from full-time farming to a life of service in the 1980s when he began as a facility services engineer at the Jefferson County North school district. He then went to work for Jefferson County running a road grader, a position he retired from in 2012. Throughout these years he served in a host of civil service roles, including as a Volunteer Firefighter, City Council Member, and Mayor. He was also a life member of VFW Post 3084, the Knights of Columbus, and the American Legion.

On any given weekend, you could find “Pops”, Lorraine and their dogs participating in parades, car shows, and threshing bees with his 1929 Model A Ford Pickup (“It’s not a car!”) or any number of other vehicles or John Deere tractors he restored throughout his life. He was a devoted catholic who never met a stranger and would do anything he could to help someone in need. His warmth, kindness, and playfulness will be deeply missed, but carry on in his greatest legacy: his children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. Pops extended his warmth throughout the Midwest as a mainstay of the annual Mount Pleasant, Iowa Old Threshers Reunion and member of their truck club. He was also a member of the Flint Hills Model A Club, and frequent participant in Meriden Antique Engine and Threshers Association and McLouth Threshing Bee events.

Mass of Christian Burial was June 10, 2021 at St. Mary’s Immaculate Conception Church in Valley Falls. Burial with Military Honors was conducted by Grahem-Herbers V.F.W. Post 3084 at the St. Mary’s Catholic Cemetery. Memorials can be made in his name to Grahem-Herbers V.F.W. Post 3084 in Valley Falls, Winchester American Legion or Old Threshers Reunion (in Mt. Pleasant, IA) c/o Mercer Funeral Home, P.O. Box 6, Valley Falls, Kansas 66088.



Roger Baland at memorial at Lutremange



Roger and Odile with 35th Tribute

Salute to the late Roger Baland

Submitted by Pat Shannon

“The 35th Division Association lost a good friend” with the passing of Roger Baland. Those were the words of Marilyn Bowers - Jensen and others of the 35th Division when they heard the news of Roger Baland’s passing away from cancer on June 25th of this year.

Roger was the driving force behind the Battle of the Bulge Memorial in Lutremange, Belgium. (See feature article on pages 11-12). He was like a lighthouse keeper, always there to welcome visiting tour groups and individuals of Santa Fe veterans and their families, as they made their way through the rolling hills of the European countryside.

Roger was born in 1961 in the Ardennes village of Bertogne, just on the other side of Bastogne from the hamlet of Lutremange. After finishing his Belgian military service during the Cold War, Roger met his future wife Odile who was from the village of Villers-La-Bonne-Eau, which is the neighboring village of Lutremange. They built their home and raised their two children – Daisy and Jeremy and were now enjoying the babysitter life of dotting grandparents.

Living in Lutremange, Roger soon discovered that he was surrounded by remnants of the Battle of the Bulge – the largest battle that US Army has ever fought. When he took his children for walks in the nearby forest, they would inevitably come across war debris that they would add to their family collection. Some of the church pews of the local church at Villers-La-Bonne-Eau still have bullet holes. His mother in law – Germaine Garcia was ten years old during the battle and lost her mother and two older sisters in the bombing. Between the villages of Lutremange and Villers-La-Bonne-Eau he found a decrepit old bunker in a middle of a cow field, grown over with weeds and debris.

When Roger learned of the planned visit of Santa Fe veterans and their families in September 2002 he began working on the memorial. The concrete bunker sits on the hill between the villages of Villers-La-Bonne-Eau and Lutremange. It looks down the slope towards Luxembourg on the other side of the valley, where the German Panzer tanks came across the bridge into Lutremange and headed up the road towards Villers-La-Bonn-Eau (see adjoining article on the details of the 35th Memorial at the Lutremange Bunker).

Roger worked tirelessly to pull away the dirt, weeds and debris that covered the bunker. Around it he helped set up poles for the USA and Belgian flags, worked with local officials to install a boulder to hold a plaque to the US Third Army and 35th, and installed a display case (in French) to explain to passersby what had happened in this now peaceful area.

For the next nineteen years, whenever a Santa Fe contingent came to visit the area, Roger was there to organize a local color guard, play the USA and Belgium national anthems and place a small brass plaque with the name of the soldier on the bunker. After each ceremony the guests were invited to his home for a meal. If the visitors had the time, he would take them into the forest of the Seven Paths to show them the foxholes and the key positions where their comrades or fathers might have fallen. Throughout the year, he maintained the memorial grounds and kept the flags flying and a remembrance candle lit.

At times Roger would find a memento, a photo or card left by a solitary visitor that he would collect and take care of in his growing collection of memorabilia. Even though his English was limited those Americans who met him, and who likewise couldn’t speak French, had little trouble communicating with him. He understood what they were looking for and was always there to help in the most energetic way possible.

Roger’s work for the 35th did not come unnoticed. He was asked to join the Bastogne City Honor guard and participated in the annual Battle of the Bulge “Nuts” Remembrance Ceremonies.

All of Roger’s work was done on a purely voluntary basis. It was just something that he believed was important. It was his tribute to the men and the families of United States who paid so dearly to liberate his country from the Nazi Regime. It might be difficult for those who have never been under foreign occupation to truly appreciate what liberty means. But for Roger, and many people of Europe, it is still in their collective memory and they live with reminders of it each day. The 35th Memorial at Lutremange is one of those special places – and we have Roger and his family to thank for that.

**Deadline for
the Next Issue
of the
Santa Fe Express is
7 September 2021**

Please send your favorite stories and pictures to share.

Battle of the Bulge - 35th Memorial at Lutremange, Belgium

Submitted by Pat Shannon

The bunker at Lutremange was built by the Belgian government just before the Second World War as tensions with Hitler's Germany started to rise. It sits just up the hill from the hamlet of Lutremange and has a direct line of sight across to Luxembourg on the other side of the valley. There is a small road that runs from Luxembourg, through the hamlet of Lutremange and to the villages of Villers-La Bonn-Eau and Lutrebois. These villages lie about 10 miles outside of Bastogne – which was a key crossroads objective for the Germany Army.

The bunker, however, was never used as a defensive position by the Belgian Army. The German blitzkrieg of 1940 swept through the Belgian Ardennes region. Belgium, France and the Netherlands all surrendered in the first few months of fighting. After four years of occupation, the German Army retreated in September 1944 with the advance of the US and Allied forces through France after the D-Day landings in Normandy. The Ardennes region of Belgium had a short three months of liberation from the Nazi Regime until December 1944 when the Germans caught the American and British forces off guard and re-invaded in what would be called the Battle of the Bulge (a 'bulge' was created in the Allied lines). The Battle of the Bulge – or the Ardennes Offensive – named after the Ardennes region of Belgium would become the largest single battle in US Army history. Nearly 1 million Allied troops were committed to the fighting that took six weeks and covered hundreds of miles of a moving front line.

There is an extensive pine forest that runs along the ridgeline from Lutremange towards Bastogne. This is where the German Army poured into as they encircled the city of Bastogne. The canopy of pines provided perfect cover from Allied bombers and artillery spotter planes. The forest is crisscrossed with logging trails which all come together on a plateau at the top of the ridge where it gets its name "the forest of the Seven Paths". The fox holes and dugouts that the German troops dug into the forest are still visible under the layers of pine needles that cover the ground.

It was from these positions that the Germans fired off artillery and mortar rounds onto the 101st and 10th Armored Division soldiers that were defending the perimeter of the Bastogne. There were 10,000 American forces surrounded in the city and it was Patton's primary objective to break through to relieve them.

The 35th Division was tapped to lead Infantry charge along with Patton's Armored Divisions (the 4th and 6th Armored). All three regiments of the 35th (134th, 137th and 320th) were committed to the fight. The men of the Santa Fe were the first infantry to link up with the 101st Airborne in the town of Marvie, just on the other side of the Seven Paths ridgeline. When Hitler was informed by his generals that Patton's Third

continued on page 12



Bunker in winter



Honor Guard at memorial



The rear of memorial



Memorial Stone in Winter



Looking from the memorial to Luxembourg with a rainbow in the background

35th Memorial

continued from page 11

Army had opened a slim corridor into Bastogne, he ordered his elite SS Panzer Tank Division (Leibstandarte Adolph Hitler – LAH) to close the gap and crush the American forces. This final assault, led by the SS Panzer Tanks, was one of the last offensive actions of the Nazi regime. It was the soldiers of the 35th that took the brunt of the German assault around the villages of Lutremange, Villers-La Bonne Eau, Lutrebois and Marvie.

The SS Panzer tank column, coming from the Luxembourg crossed over the stone bridge at the bottom of the ravine and into Lutremange. There the tanks split into two columns, one column took the road leading to Lutrebois and the other took the road leading up to Villers-La-Bonne-Eau. The 35th had just dug into the hills surrounding Lutrebois and with their ant-tank guns and bazookas, along with coordinated air support and artillery fire, they stopped the Panzers cold in their tracks. Lutrebois was the “grave of the 7 Panzer Company”, 1st SS Division (Tiemann).

The fighting was still not over. It took another two weeks to dislodge the German forces from the woods of the Seven Paths. It was some of the most vicious fighting on the Western Front which was made even more difficult by the winter conditions. There was at times a foot of snow on the ground with temperatures averaging 20 degrees Fahrenheit (minus 7 degrees Celsius).

The civilians in the area were caught between the anvil and the hammer. Roger Baland’s mother-in-law, Germaine Garcia was 10 years old at the time. The Garcia family was forced out of their house by the invading German troops. They tried to escape in the night across the snow-covered fields but were cut up by shrapnel from an exploding shell. Her mother and two older sisters died from their wounds. Her father and brother were severely wounded. It soon became clear that the only way to dislodge the Germans troops was to saturate bomb the forests and towns. 100,000 American shells were fired into the Seven Paths Ridgeline over ten days of fighting, and 6,000 shells alone landed in the Village of La-Bonne-Eau in a single day. Little remained standing of the original fifteen houses and church. Even after the intense bombing the remaining German soldiers still put up fierce resistance.

The 35th were tasked to push the Germans back off the ridge. With the help of the 90th Division, that came up from the south on the right flank, the Germans were forced back over the border of Luxembourg toward the town of Harlange. The “Harlange Wedge” soon became death trap for thousands of the German troops and “was undoubtably one of the greatest American successes since the Battle of the Ardennes had begun” (Bergstrom).

The price to the Santa Fe was, however, very high. Nearly one third of the Division were either killed, wounded or taken prisoner. One of those taken prisoner was Michael Linquata, a 19-year-old medic. He had been taken prisoner when his company was ambushed in one of the early assaults into the forest. Michael was left with two dozen wounded men under his care, lost deep in the woods, when the uninjured of his company decided to retreat. Nighttime was fast approaching, and the men were bleeding into the snow, so he took it upon himself to surrender to get medical help from the Germans. His act saved many of the men from a certain death, but it also meant he spent the rest of the war as a POW. When he looked back on his time as a prisoner, he said that he would rather die than live through that time again.

Medic Linquata came back to Lutremange in 2002 with a delegation of Santa Fe veterans and their families. At that time the bunker was abandoned and overgrown, barely visible from the street. Roger worked tirelessly to pull away the dirt, weeds and debris that covered it. Around the bunker he helped set up poles for the USA and Belgian flags, worked with local officials to have a boulder placed to hold a plaque, and installed a display case (in French) to explain to passerby’s what had happened in this now peaceful area.

The Plaque at the memorial site states (English translation):

This plaque is dedicated to the soldiers and officers of the Third Army commanded by General Patton and in particular to the 35th Infantry Division who fought terrible battles in this region during the winter 1944-1945 in order to repel the German invader.

For the last 19, whenever a Santa Fe contingent came to visit the area, Roger was there to organize a local color guard, play the national anthems and place a small brass plaque with the name of the soldier on the bunker. After each ceremony the guests were invited to his home for meal. If the visitors had the time, he would take them into the forest of the Seven Paths to show them the foxholes and the key positions where their comrades or fathers might have fallen.

The 35th Memorial at Lutremange is one of three memorials to the Santa Fe Soldiers that fought in the Battle of the Bulge. The other two memorials are in Weiswampach, and Boulaide Luxembourg. The distance between these three memorials is 33 miles (54 kilometers) – to give a sense on how large or an area the 35th were fighting in the winter of 1945. And that only covers the southern portion of the entire battlefield where nearly two million Allied and German soldiers fought in a defining moment of the Second World War.

35th Division Association 103rd Annual Conference and 35th Infantry Division Dining Out Registration

Oct. 8-10, 2021 Airport Hilton, 8801 NW 112th Street, Kansas City, MO 64153

Rate is \$108* plus taxes, if registered by 5 Aug 2021. For reservations, respond directly to hotel at Telephone (816) 891-8900, 1-800-Hilton or Fax 1-816-891-8984

Name(s): _____ Unit: (CO/BN/ RGT/BDE) _____
Telephone: _____ E-Mail: _____
Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

#PERSONS	TIME	EVENT	PER PERSON	\$\$
		HONORARY ATTENDEE – CANNOT ATTEND	\$30.00	_____
		CONFERENCE SPONSOR	\$100.00	_____

FRIDAY, OCT 8th 2021

_____	10:00AM-12:30PM	Registration in Hotel
_____	1:00-1:15 PM	Load Vans for 35 th Div HQs, Fort Leavenworth tour
_____	1:30 to 4:00PM	Tour 35 th Division Headquarters and Barracks
_____	5:30PM-7:30 PM	Presidents Reception and remembering our heroes (Osage Ballroom)

SATURDAY, OCT 9th 2021

_____	8:30 AM-9:30 AM	Nominating and Executive Committee Meeting (Committee Members)	
	10:00AM-11:00AM	Hall of Fame Committee Meeting (Committee Members)	
	11:00 AM-12:00 P	Annual Meeting (Shawnee B)	
	12:00 AM- 1:00 PM	Lunch – On Your Own	
_____	1:30PM-3:30 PM	Hall of Fame Ceremony & Reception (Shawnee B)	
	5:00PM to 6:00PM	Cash Bar and Social	
	6:00PM	Banquet – Awards & Program (Hosted by 35 th DIV) Shawnee Ballroom	
_____	8 oz Sirloin Steak served with Mashed Potatoes -	\$36	_____
_____	Lemon & Rosemary Chicken (also gluten free) -	\$33	_____
_____	Ratatouille in Puff Pastry (Vegetarian) -	\$31	_____
_____	Chicken strips/fries (Children's Meal) -	\$16	_____

SUNDAY, OCT 10th 2021

_____	9:00AM-11:00AM	Completion of Hall of Fame Committee Meeting (If Required)
-------	----------------	--

Total Amount Enclosed _____

(Make checks payable to 35th Division Assn. Send to P O Box 5004, Topeka, KS 66605.)
(If only attending the Dining Out, mail to 35th DIV HQs (35th Infantry Division ATTN: SGS, 2 Sherman Dr, Ft. Leavenworth, KS 66027) (Payment may be made for Conference and Dining Out using the email address 35divassn@gmail.com 5% fee

Deadline for Hotel for special rate Aug 5th, 2021 (Direct to hotel)
*(Hotel price of \$108 includes 2 breakfast buffets and 2 complimentary bar drinks)