

DEADEYE DISPATCH



Official Newsletter of the 96th Infantry Division Deadeye Association

Fall, 2015

Reunion Destination 2016: Washington, D.C.

Submitted by
Annie Moroz Duncan,
2016 Reunion Coordinator

We are excited to invite all 96th Deadeye Association Veterans, members, family and friends to join us at our 2016 annual reunion being held in Arlington, Virginia, Thursday, July 14-Sunday, July 17, 2016.

While taking time to visit old friends and make new ones, you can enjoy a guided bus tour of the DC area including a stop at the WWII monument and a visit to Arlington National Cemetery. Or spend the day with your family and friends exploring our nation's capitol via a nearby metro station. Also close by are the restaurants on 23rd Street and the Crystal City Shops.

The hotel is offering a special dinner for our members prior to the Beer Bust Friday evening. This year's Beer Bust theme is patriotic so please pack something red, white and blue to wear Friday evening.

Saturday morning brings the

Memorial Service followed by the group picture. The Ladies' Luncheon and Men's Luncheon (including former ASTP members and any interested men) will be held early Saturday afternoon. Enjoy your free time until Saturday's Banquet. Feel free to extend your stay by arriving

Wednesday or leaving Monday at the same group rate.

So mark the calendar now - July 14-17, 2016, in Arlington, VA. Bring your friends and family for a wonderful reunion. We look forward to seeing you there.

The Early Info On **DEADEYE REUNION 2016**

DESTINATION: Arlington, Virginia, USA
DATES: Thurs., July 14- Sun., July 17, 2016
RE: 96th Deadeye Association Reunion 2016



This is a scene from the 2005 Deadeye Reunion held in the Washington, D.C. area. This photo was taken at the World War II Memorial.

Let's honor and support the 96th Division Deadeye Dispatch

We have not heard from many members of our Deadeye families for a long time! We currently have over 1,000 names on our mailing list and spend over \$1,200 per year sending out the Deadeye Dispatch. The Association is seeking donations to support the Dispatch mailings; your support is always welcome and appreciated.

Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email address _____ Phone: _____ Cell _____

(Phone and email will only be used if we need to contact you --The 96th Infantry Division Association is committed to respecting and protecting the privacy of its membership.)

Please accept my donation to help cover the cost of the Dispatch and the 96th Infantry Division Deadeye Association: \$ _____ . Please designate if this gift is in honor/memory of one of our beloved Deadeyes.

This gift is in Honor or Memory of _____.

Checks should be made payable to:
96th Infantry Division Deadeye Association
c/o Dennis O'Brien, Treasurer, 6800 S Strand, #585, Yuma, AZ 85364



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DISPATCH

TAPS.....Honoring Those Who Have Gone Before Us

Albert Adkisson
Decaturville, TN
Co. G, 382nd Inf.
May 27, 2012

Gerald Craig Sr
Burton, MI
Co. C, 382nd Inf.
May 16, 2014
by Gerald Craig

Vernon Duncan
Jacksonville, FL
Co. E, 383rd Inf.
February 9, 2015
by Emma Duncan

Patrick J. McDermott
Las Vegas, NV
Co. A, 383rd Inf.
died 2/8/2015
by wife, Gladys D. McDermott

Alton Berger
Westby, WI
Co. I, 382nd Inf.
October 2, 2013
by granddaughter Dawn Konze

Edward Darlington
Tacoma, WA
January 27, 2015
Co. I, 381st Inf.
by his son

Orrie Gruwell
Enterprise, OR
Co. F, 383rd Inf.
January 23, 2014
by son, Ronald Gruwell

Evon (Penny) Pennington
Medford, OR
383rd Cannon
February 17, 2015
by Janice Howes

Robert L. Boucher
Norwalk, CT 06851
Antitank 382nd
February 20, 2009
by son Robert Boucher

Carl H Davis
Davenport, IA
Co. D, 383rd Inf.
November 19, 2014
by daughter, Judy Benson

Harold Gulzow
North Platte, NE
763rd Tank Bn
September 20, 2013
by son, Steve Gulzow

Irwin C. Ricker
Baltimore, MD
Co. F, 382nd Inf.
March 9, 2015
by son, Stephen Ricker

R.E. (Gene) Brady
Arvada, CO
96th Infantry Division
September 7, 2013
by Son Bob

Alta Dentino
widow of William Dentino
Washington, IL
April 28, 2015
by US Postal Service

Robert J. Hendricks
Stephen, MN
April 3, 2015
Co. H, 382nd Inf.
by son Brian L. Hendricks

Clarence M. Schadegg
Glen Haven, CO
May 15, 2015
Co. L, 383rd Infantry
by daughter, Georgia Ballard

Charles Branaugh
Yankton, SD
December 8, 2014
Co. I, 383rd Infantry
by Harry Brown, Co. I, 383rd

Jack Diamond
Lubbock, TX
321st MEDIC
December 20, 2008
by Fred Baker

Ralph W. Hettick
Palmyra, IL
August 14, 2013
by sons, Bob and Ferol Hettick

Billy Sizemore Sr.
Rossford and Toledo, Ohio and
Cypress, Texas
March 15, 2015
by online obituary

Gordon D. Brookhart
Granite Bay, California
March 19, 2015
Company C, 381st Infantry
Regiment
by wife Betty

Henry Does
Tonica, IL
Co. C, 383rd Inf.
December 26, 2002
by US Postal Service

Bob Huff
Indianapolis, IN
Co. A, 383rd Inf.
March 12, 2015
by wife, Fran Huff

Pat Strenski
Wife of Deadeye Ray "Doc"
Strenski, Co. K, 383rd Inf.
Green Bay, WI
May 18, 2015
by son, Dan

Jean Chapaton
July 30, 2014
by daughter Maureen Chapaton
Rivard

Torrence William "Bill" Dohl
Venice, Florida
Co. D, 382nd Inf.
Apr 11, 2015
by Torrence "Terry" Dohl Jr.

June Kern
Wife of Deadeye Michael Kern
Wolf Point, MT
July 24, 2014
by USPS

James B Warren
Faribault MN
Co L, 383rd Infantry
August 16, 2015
by son, Bryan Warren

Robert E Corrigan
Bellevue, WA
2nd BN HQ 382nd
March 23, 2012
by US Postal Service

Donald Van Doornik
Holland, MI
Co. H, 382nd Inf.
July 11, 2015
by sister, Elaine

Theodore M, Libershal
Baltimore, MD
921st Field Artillery Battalion
August 25, 2015
by son, David Libershal

Herb Wolf
Brookline, MA / Fayston, VT
Co. K, 383rd Infantry Division
April 6, 2015
posted by Brad Brown

Former Deadeye president passes



Remembering Former Association President, Bob Huff
by Mary Eleanor Wood Smith

During the Memorial Service, many in attendance think about the faces and names of soldiers that are not present. The songs "My Buddy" and "The Empty Chair" remind the audience of the young men who never attended a 96th Infantry Deadeye Reunion because they gave their lives during the Battles on Okinawa and Leyte..

These men are the reason that the Deadeye Association was organized and had the first reunion in 1958. Over the years men and their families attend in a designated city to renew friendships and cultivate new Deadeye acquaintances that have served with the 96th Infantry Division..

This year Robert Huff was represented by his wife, Fran, his daughter Susan and husband Tom. Also in attendance were his granddaughter and his twin grandsons.

Fourteen years ago, Fran and Bob were awaiting the arrival of the twins. This year the twins turned thirteen and attended their first Deadeye reunion. Bob, retired from GMAC, and is present at his permanent duty station in heaven.

Robert Dean Huff, 90, a former president of the Deadeye organization, passed away March 12, 2015.

He attended the first Deadeye reunion, held in St. Louis, and many more. He also was included in the Indy Honor Flight to Washington, D. C. in 2014, receiving a tumultuous homecoming, which he did not have after WWII. Huff, who served with Co. A, 383rd, was wounded on Okinawa and received the purple heart.

Submit a name for Taps

Our Taps information comes from a variety of sources, including emails, notes from family and friends and returned mail from the U.S. Postal Service. We apologize for any information that may be incorrect or incomplete. To submit a name for Taps, please contact one of the following:

Diane O'Brien
PO Box 34, Trempealeau, WI 54661-0034
Phone: 608-534-5141
or 608-317-2496
Email: ddoebrien@trivest.net

Pat McMillan
4402 Chapman Ave.
Springdale, AR 72762
Phone: 479-200-1841
Email: pmil45@yahoo.com

58 Years of Deadeye Reunion Cities

YEAR	CITY	ST	YEAR	CITY	ST	YEAR	CITY	ST
1958	St Louis	MO	1978	New Orleans	LA	1998	Ft Mitchell	KY
1959	Chicago	IL	1979	Denver	CO	1999	Denver	CO
1960	Kansas City	MO	1980	Springfield	IL	2000	Salt Lake City	UT
1961	Detroit	MI	1981	Milwaukee	WI	2001	Omaha	NE
1962	Dallas	TX	1982	Dearborn	MI	2002	Kansas City	MO
1963	Little Rock	AR	1983	Houston	TX	2003	Tulsa	OK
1964	Portland	OR	1984	St Paul	MN	2004	Salt Lake City	UT
1965	Minneapolis	MN	1985	Oklahoma City	OK	2005	Washington	DC
1966	Indianapolis	IN	1986	Fresno	CA	2006	Denver	CO
1967	Omaha	NE	1987	Memphis	TN	2007	Salt Lake City	UT
1968	Chicago	IL	1988	Peoria	IL	2008	Nashville	TN
1969	Des Moines	IA	1989	Rapid City	SD	2009	Branson	MO
1970	Detroit	MI	1990	Omaha	NE	2010	Milwaukee	WI
1971	Denver	CO	1991	Spokane	WA	2011	Columbus	GA
1972	New Orleans	LA	1992	Louisville	KY	2012	Colorado Springs	CO
1973	Peoria	IL	1993	Sparks	NV	2013	San Diego	CA
1974	Indianapolis	IN	1994	Hot Springs	AR	2014	Chicago	IL
1975	Kansas City	KS	1995	Lubbock	TX	2015	New Orleans	LA
1976	Fort Worth	TX	1996	Des Moines	IA	2016	Washington	DC
1977	Cincinnati	OH	1997	St Louis	MO	2017	Minneapolis	MN

New Orleans Reunion 2015...

Farewell to N'AWLINS!

*Submitted by Diane O'Brien, reunion coordinator
Photos courtesy of Joe Boyak*

The 58th Annual 96th Infantry Deadeye Association reunion was held at the JW Marriott Hotel in New Orleans in late July 2015. Many individuals helped make this reunion a success; it was truly a team effort! The History Room proved to be a popular area once again—thank you to Don Dencker! A special thanks to Joe Boyack for his endless energy in taking pictures throughout the reunion.

The reunion started Friday, July 31st, with a deluxe continental breakfast followed by a bus trip to The National World War II Museum. The Museum is spectacular and features the Road to Berlin, dedicated in December 2014, and the Road to Tokyo which officially opens this December. We viewed "Beyond all Boundaries" which is a film presented in 4D documenting the war and narrated by Tom Hanks. We had 104 in attendance, and the Museum Guide was presented as the gift to all attending Deadeyes and Deadeye widows.

The Friday evening fun began with 69 of our Deadeyes/family members joining together for an "On the Bayou—Taste of New Orleans" buffet, followed by the annual Beer Bust with 110 in attendance. A "Mardi Gras" theme with masks and beads decorated the banquet hall.

Saturday, August 1, began with the memorial service held at the hotel. Chaplain Glenn Stewart did a wonderful job organizing the memorial service. We were fortunate to have the Boy Scout Troop 888 and Navy Sea Cadets from Baton Rouge, LA provide the Presentation and Retiring the Colors. Michael Conger (a trumpet player for seven years) enjoyed the opportunity to play Taps for the memorial service. Michael is the grandson to R F Conger (deceased) who was a Deadeye in the 281st Infantry Regiment, Co. E, 3rd Platoon, who served on Leyte and Okinawa and came to past reunions. Jordan Baker, who holds a Master's of music degree in Jazz Studies from the University of New Orleans, played the piano for the many audience participation songs.

Speaker Jim Causey became a Deadeye as a replacement assignment to C Company of the 381st. He re-joined the Army and served in the Korean and Vietnam wars. Jim and his wife Pat are Patriot Circle members of The National WWII Museum.

Immediately following the Memorial Service, the chairs were quickly removed for the annual pictures of our Deadeyes, widows/wives, ASTP Family, and group picture.

A delicious and fun Ladies' Luncheon was hosted by Mary Eleanor 'Sis' Wood Smith. Fond memories were shared by all in attendance. A smaller group of 15 attended the Men's ASTP Luncheon with much reminiscing.

On Saturday evening a group attended the Vigil Mass at the St. Louis Cathedral. This is a beautiful symbol of New Orleans and a tribute to the people and clergy who have struggled to preserve it. Few cities in the world are so identified by a building as is New Orleans.

The farewell banquet began with a social hour followed by a dinner served to 112 of our attendees. Glenn Stewart blessed the food and at the end prayed we all travel safe until we meet again next year. Glenn gave the banquet speech titled 'A 96th Division Deadeye's story from 19 to 89 years old'. Glenn joined the 96th as a replacement on April 12, 1945. He outlined many of his significant experiences in uniform and combat. He concluded his speech by relating his never ending efforts to make the Memorial Service the centerpiece of the reunion, and then he compared the larger reunions of the past to the smaller ones today. He also highlighted memories from past beer bust events. Robert Feinstein, son of a Deadeye, read excerpts from his late Father's 'Letters from Leyte'. Bill Beckman, a Deadeye, and his wife Judy were welcomed as 'first timers' to the reunion. Bill read the poem he wrote in 1945 titled 'Okinawa'. It was an evening to remember!

The 96th Families left with many happy memories and looking forward to more fun in Washington DC in 2016.



New Orleans Reunion 2015



Ladies have fun at annual luncheon

Nineteen ladies attended the annual ladies' luncheon which had as its theme, "Traditions, Celebrations and Recipes."

Mary Eleanor Wood Smith, chairman, said the theme was chosen "in recognition of how often our happiness and memories are shared with family and friends around the dining room table."

She asked those in attendance to share something of their favorite events and favorite recipes and commented that she would like to see a 96th Division recipe booklet compiled.

Judy Beckman was recognized as the wife of a first-timer. She also was the winner in a fun contest. It was

"The Geezer Test" in which 20 items, such as Lincoln logs, were listed and attendees were asked how many they remembered.

"We had a lovely time," said Mrs. Smith, "and the ladies left with smiles on their faces and some with their party hats on."

Those in attendance were: Linda Bekermeier, Betty Bourgeois, Bernice Caspers, Clara Causey McKinnon, Jenna Constantino, Annie Duncan, Fran Huff, Susan Huff Constantino, Beverly Johnston, Susie Kidwell, Shirley Kots, Helen Partridge, Susan Shanks, Ruth Siefert, Faye Simmons, Karen Tibbs, Ruby Winings, Mrs. Beckman and Mrs. Smith.

Banquet Speaker

Glenn Stewart recalls WWII days

Deadeye Glenn Stewart, a member of the 383rd, gave the banquet address at the 2015 reunion, recalling some of his experiences during World War II.

The Californian said one of his strongest memories of the early days of the war came via an announcement he had to make as a student at a high school dance in 1942. This is the announcement:

"Lt. Col. Jimmy Doolittle's four squadrons of B-25 bombers have successfully bombed Tokyo, the first military retaliation for Pearl Harbor."

That was a happy, noisy bunch of high school kids, Stewart said.

The speaker went on to relay some of his strong memories of the latter days of the war when he was in combat. He recalled how much his faith meant and how much a New Testament/Psalms, given him by his father who had used it during World War I, meant.

The Deadeye told of some incidents when he felt his life was endangered but he survived because "He kept me safe." Stewart said he lost the New Testament/Psalms during a difficult encounter during combat but got a replacement with help from the Red Cross.

On one occasion, the speaker said, he was especially pleased to be able to help an old buddy, Robert Louis Stevenson, when Stevenson was severely wounded.

"(We) had been buddies since basic training," he said. "It appeared he had been shot in the thigh or hip area. Several others helped me



get him down off the hill out of range of gunfire. We strapped him on a tank and sent him back for medical attention."

Despite Stevenson's 13 surgeries, he survived the war and today lives in Davis, Calif., said Stewart.

The speaker told of his long affiliation with the Deadeye organization, recalling that he and his late wife, Rita, attended their first reunion in 1993 in Reno, Nev. He said they missed the first one, held in 1958, because they had "a previous engagement"—their wedding was on July 13 that year.

Stewart has served as chaplain of the Deadeye organization and planned the memorial services for several years.

A message & request from Glenn Stewart...

For the New Orleans memorial service, I included the military songs as audience participation, just like the hymns.

I received several favorable comments. Please express your opinion and return to Glenn.Stewart.1925@gmail.com.

I favor audience participation

Use guest musicians, if available

Deadeye News & Features

The victory of our forces on Okinawa

Celebrates the 70th Anniversary of the end of WWII

Submitted by William "Bill" Hill

On May 17 the 88-year-old Chancellor of University of Richmond, Virginia, Dr.E.Bruce Heilman, came to Indianapolis having ridden his motorcycle all the way from San Diego. He made this trip honoring the 70th Anniversary of the end of WWII and the battle of Okinawa where so many young men died. He was proudly escorted by Members of the Patriot Guard and the American Legion Riders to the WWII Memorial on the American Legion Mall. Here he was met by nine Okinawa veterans waiting for him. He served his country as a Marine on Okinawa.

Old Glory was flying at half-mast in a breeze and a wreath was placed at the Memorial while taps were being played.

The Okinawa Veterans were treated with a visit to the garage area of the Indianapolis 500 race as it was Qualification Day. Then they proceeded to Garden City Plaza where they had a meal prepared and the opportunity to talk with the Chancellor. The Indy Honor Flight made all the arrangements.

Deadeye veteran William Hill passed out soil samples he brought from Okinawa to each veteran and also presented a 96th Division shoulder patch to Dr. Heilman. Les Brown, Deadeye, was also present.

Dr. Heilman will proceed to Washington on his motorcycle. New York City has plans for a three-day celebration.

Brad Brown, Lester Brown's son, has posted several nice pictures on the Deadeye Facebook site.



Deadeye Chaplain Leonard Todd

Submitted by Don Dencker

One thing I remember about in my wartime experiences is our Chaplain Leonard Todd. Chaplain Todd, from Illinois, volunteered for service in the Army. After preliminary training for chaplain service, he was assigned chaplain for the 382nd Infantry Regiment, 96th Infantry Division, in January 1943.

Another thing I remember about Chaplain Todd was that he spent a lot of time with the rifle companies. He was no rear echelon minister. One incident I remember well was during the Battle of Okinawa. He came up to my Company L. He then borrowed a rifle and went up to a very front position to take some shots at the Japanese.

He stayed with us until the end of the war. I am certain he was considered "one of us" by all of the men in the 382nd Regiment.



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DEADEYE REUNION 2016

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 RE: 96th Deadeye Association Reunion 2016



Deadeye News & Features

STARS AND STRIPES[®]

The bloody battle for Okinawa:

Veterans recall the luck, grit that got them through

By Matthew M. Burke
Stars and Stripes
Published: August 5, 2015

(This article by Matthew M. Burke is reprinted with permission from Stars and Stripes newspaper web site. Stars and Stripes Operations Manager, Richard Oleszewski, invites Deadeyes to reconnect with Stars and Stripes news stories from the World War II era by visiting their web site, www.stripes.com.)

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa – Virgil “Bub” Simmons’ Army demolition squad unit was called to the front to blow up a cave as the 82-day Battle of Okinawa was winding down. Walking up a trail, he heard a “clip-clop” and ordered his men off the trail.

Next thing he knew, he was face to face with a Japanese officer on horseback in a “beautiful” dress uniform. Simmons raised his .45, ordering the man to drop his pistol. He obliged.

Then Simmons noticed he had unsheathed his sword. The officer reared back.

“I just couldn’t take it,” the 91-year-old recalled in June, when he and four other veterans returned for the 70th anniversary of the battle. “I could see my head laying there on the trail. So I touched one off. I blew him out of the saddle.”

The man’s name was Army Maj. Gen. Sadaichi Furuyama of the Infantry Corps. Simmons collected his dog tag and still has it. The dog tag was once a young man’s war trophy. Now it carries an unwanted memory because he still ponders his decision to fire: Was Furuyama going to use the sword? He wasn’t going to wait to find out.

The Battle of Okinawa is one of the bloodiest and most tragic chapters of the Pacific war, claiming the lives of 110,000 Japanese troops, 140,000 Okinawan civilians and 12,520

American servicemembers.

It’s etched in the memory of every survivor. Though their numbers are dwindling – most are in their early 90s – they all have stories to tell, including the moral quandaries they faced.

Simmons was with the 96th Infantry Division and was already a seasoned combat veteran when he arrived on Okinawa in April 1945. He had been shot in the leg in the Philippines, where he earned a Bronze Star for valor.

On Okinawa, the division’s task was to cut the island in two and push south, he recalled. Simmons’ job was to destroy caves where Japanese troops – or civilians – were hunkered down.

“I was ordered to go up and blow this cave,” he said. “So I went up there and all I saw was children and women. And I refused to blow the cave. It was huge. I just couldn’t do it.”

His superiors told him it was OK this time, but that he better follow orders. He blew several more as they moved south and was wounded when an artillery shell peppered his body with small metal shards.

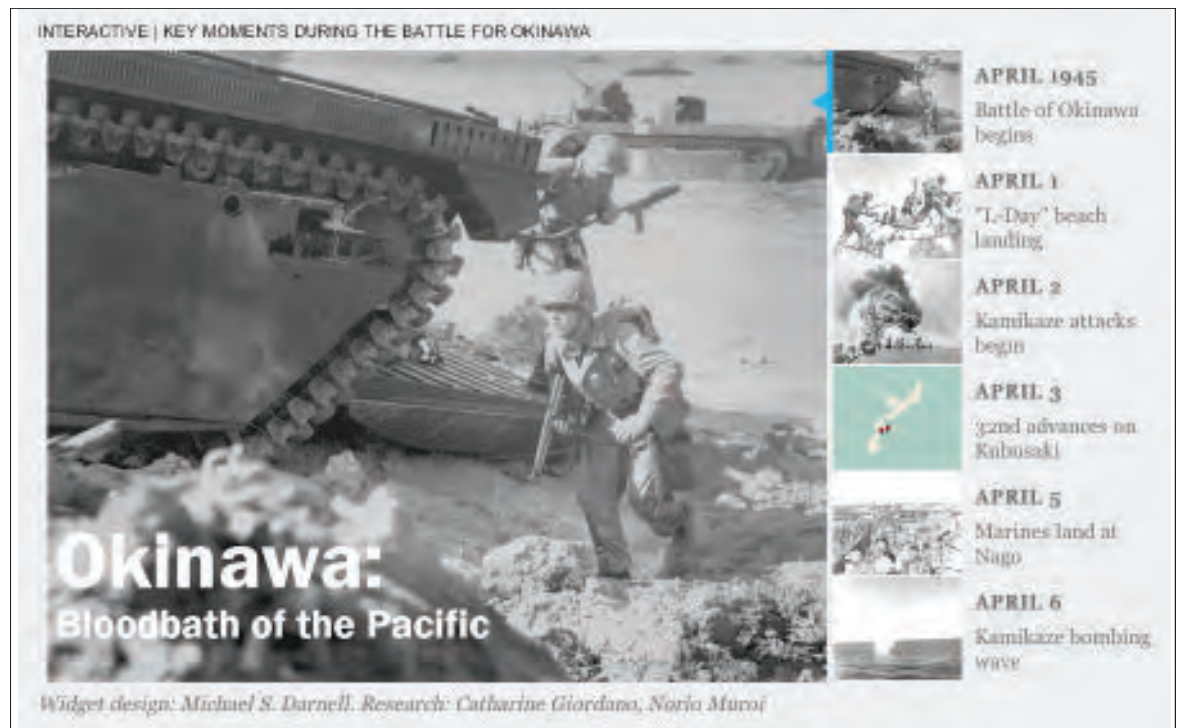
Ozzie Aasland, now 92, remembers the island defenders allowing the 6th Marine Division to land with little resistance. They wanted the Marines concentrated in one area so they could decimate them.

“It kind of backfired on them,” he said.

Aasland would remain there for 103 days, firing 105mm Howitzer rounds.

The only time he really felt scared was during a strafing run by an enemy aircraft.

“The bullets were tracking along like a sewing machine,” he recalled. “You only had a few seconds to know what was coming and analyze if it was going to hit you. You’re thinking, ‘Is this



my time?”

The gunfire missed.

Don Bryan, a 96th Infantry Division medic, also can’t forget his close calls.

One night, after hunkering down with three others a short ways down the slope from Needle Rock, on Hacksaw Ridge, a Japanese grenade landed in the middle of them. The enemy had crawled up to their position under cover of darkness.

The men had no time to react. They all just hit the deck. The grenade went off.

Miraculously, no one was injured.

After breakfast the next day, Bryan was returning to their position to retrieve his belongings when he saw a Japanese squitter running away with one of their machine guns. Another grenade landed nearby. He ran. “I got hit in my left arm,” he said. “So that was the end of it for me.”

Roman Klimkowicz, a forward observer from the 96th, remembered a one-in-a-million shot that possibly saved the lives of his

comrades and likely doomed one of the last Japanese defenders of the island.

Klimkowicz recalled sitting in a foxhole near the bloody Kakazu Ridge with a lieutenant, a captain and a few others when they heard a flurry of small arms fire. The captain ran out with his .45 to see what was going on. Klimkowicz ran out with his carbine.

Supported by bazookas, Marines assaulted a ridge two miles north of Naha on May 4, 1945, during the Battle of Okinawa.

They spotted a pigeon, already out of range from whomever had been shooting at it. Klimkowicz took aim and fired.

“I hit the thing by accident,” he recalled. “We went out to get it. It had a tube on its leg with all of our guns marked on graph paper... It must have been a Jap that had been overrun but hadn’t been picked up yet and he had some pigeons ... It was a lucky shot.”

Sailor Bill Haligas joined the Navy to avoid being drafted into

the Army but didn’t get a free ride either.

He arrived on the USS Maryland just in time for the Battle of Saipan. Assigned to the lower powder-handling room, his job was sending powder by elevator up to the gun room. Tightly secured below the waterline, it surely would have been his grave had anything happened, he said.

During the Battle of Saipan, the Maryland was torpedoed but was saved by the ship’s damage control team. They were able to limp back to Hawaii.

Then, the Maryland was put back into service and participated in the Battle of Leyte Gulf, where it was struck by a suicide plane.

“The kamikaze airplanes were flying around like mosquitos,” Haligas said. “They were so desperate by that time because we were getting so close to Japan.”

Please see

“Stars and Stripes”

continued on next page.



Deadeye News & Features

STARS AND STRIPES



Meat So Short
Detro. (Delayed)

Naha An Empty City Mocking Yank Entry
By Pfc. BILL LAND

Naha, Okinawa (Delayed)—The going is easier now on Okinawa—and whatever hopes the Japs had of stopping the advance of American fighting men is gone.

There is no more Kakazu Ridge or Sugarloaf Hill, and the gusts of Japanese pillboxes which made the conquest of those points so costly are now silent.

On the outskirts of the island capital fierce fighting still persists. But Naha itself is a ghost city, with nothing but death and desolation lining the once-busy streets of this city of 15,000 people.

Only the ring of an occasional OH sniper's bullet indicates life among the debris and rubble.

Yanks Made Asato River
Jap forces withdrew from the city under cover and American troops followed them in, wading across the Asato river, and then slugging laboriously through the pooping mud within the city proper.

Heavy concrete pillars on either embankment of a wretched bridge were still standing. To one way led a Jap mine-laid road resting on the mud of the receding river, with the dead piles of rubble and twisted metal scattered along its way.

Unlike many other captured cities of comparable size, there were no curious civilians to witness the advent of the tired but victorious troops—only millions of

flies buzzing excitedly from globe of abandoned food to the rotting and decomposed bodies of the unscrupulous. A nauseating stench pervaded the entire city.

Business District Ruined
Walls and other skeletal remains of shell-wrecked buildings still smoldered and threatened to collapse at any minute. The ruins appeared like decayed teeth in a rotten mouth.

In the show windows of a building in what used to be the business district could be seen the remains of several automobiles, now only scorched and twisted hulks of steel.

A firehose stood faithfully by the curb, opposite the shell of a newspaper plant where a press and typesetting machines were in other ruin. Next door was a barber shop with three broken chairs half buried under shattered tiles.

A Catholic church was filled to its roof with spare Jap aviation gasoline tanks. A three-story office building had been converted into a barracks for Japanese troops. Cases of shells and ammunition and bags of Jap uniforms which had never been used were stacked in disarray.

Barrels of machine guns still protruded from many gaping holes and windows along the city streets. At the miniature Naha railway station the wreckage of a train and smashed rails blocked the road.

Native Meets A Tank
Sitting on a pile of rubble near an entrance of what might have been the station ticket office sat a frail, bearded native who looked as though he were waiting for the next train.

Approached by a burly GI, the native pointed to an injured knee in a manner indicating he was unable to walk. The GI picked him up and, like a mother carrying a sick child, placed him in the vehicle. While one hand the native clung to a stick, his other clutched a small bundle. It was impossible to guess the man's age, for all Okinawans look old. This one could have been 40 or 70.

With each lurch of the weapons carrier some item could be looted from the man's bundle: first an empty bottle, then a bag of rice. Once a GI can of marmalade and a tin of condensed milk were found. The native handed it all to a soldier who looked at a thoughtful who handed it back to him.

The vehicle had made its cautious way over the rubble-strewn road for several miles when the native suddenly uttered a soldier's cry and then proceeded to a littered pile of lumber and masonry with an excited flow of gibberish.

Yanks Storm Last Barrier In Oki Battle
By PFC. M. K. McCLELLAND
Stars and Stripes Staff Writer

OKINAWA—Using every mountain climbing and flame-throwing tactic in the book, 7th division doughboys have stormed and burned through the Jap fortifications atop Yaeju-Dake plateau in what may turn out to be the final battle for Okinawa.

With the 96th Army division slugging forward on the north and the 1st Marine division on the west, the 7th stormed forbidding heights on the east coastal section of the great escarpment which the Nips are centering their last stand.

Aided by one of the greatest artillery barrages in the entire Pacific war, aimed at the cliffs on which the Japs were attempting to group for a last stand, the Americans threw back a desperate banzai charge and moved in for the kill.

Japs Try Infiltration
Company C, 1st Battalion, 32nd Regiment, of the 7th clawed its way up a cave-infested ridge to the bottom of a 100-foot escarpment and held onto one side during a night of attempted infiltration by the enemy. The Japs used the cover of darkness to move back into caves on ridges on the other side.

With Col. John M. Finn of the Los Angeles directing operations, Company B fought its way to the escarpment's foot and then started up the almost sheer face without drawing a single shot. The top was reached before a sniper

Widow Captured Whom?
A Jap woman was captured by a Marine unit during the night of the 14th. She was found in a cave and was carrying a small child. She was taken to a hospital and is recovering.

Yank Keeps His Date From Grave By Proxy
A Jap soldier was captured by a Marine unit during the night of the 14th. He was found in a cave and was carrying a small child. He was taken to a hospital and is recovering.

Widow Captured Whom?
A Jap woman was captured by a Marine unit during the night of the 14th. She was found in a cave and was carrying a small child. She was taken to a hospital and is recovering.

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Stars and Stripes Article (continued from prior page)

These are samples of prior "Stars and Stripes" articles available at Stripes.com

The kamikaze struck on the bow between turrets one and two, he recalled. Its 500-pound bomb went through the deck and detonated in the sick bay, killing most of the doctors and patients. Tank-borne infantry moved up to take the town of Ghuta before the Japanese could occupy it in April 1945 during the Battle of Okinawa. The men are members of the 29th Marines. Again, they limped back to Pearl Harbor, and again, they were put back in service, this time to Okinawa. The Maryland arrived prior to the landing to soften up the island's defenses, Haligas said. On April 7, they were once again hit by a kamikaze, right on top of turret three. The plane, the fuel and another 500-pound bomb cracked the 18-inch-thick steel on top of the turret, but somehow didn't penetrate it. "If it had, I wouldn't be here today," Haligas said. "Because

all the powder would be like the Arizona. All the powder would have exploded and we'd be gone." Marvin Goldberg of the USS Diachenko arrived in Okinawa in June. He had missed most of the fighting but the devastation spoke volumes. "The only thing I saw in Okinawa was Naha, and it was flattened," he said. "It was about killing them off until they were wiped out is what it basically amounted to," said Donald Dencker, an artilleryman also from the 96th. "We outlasted the Japanese." What these men saw and did had a direct impact on who they would become and the lives they would lead. Simmons and wife Fay never leave each other's side. They do everything together, from sailing to Mexico to skydiving on their 60th wedding anniversary. "My life has been a big joke," Simmons said with an easy smile. "We had fun."

Pfc. Kills 30 Japs In 15 Minutes, Snaps Line Battalion Couldn't Dent
By CPL. JOHN L. DUKE
Stars and Stripes Staff Writer

WITH 96TH DIV., OKINAWA—An infantry replacement unit that whole battalions couldn't even dent is rapidly becoming a legend hereabouts.

In his one-man massacre, Pfc. Clarence B. Craft of Santa Ana, Calif., a former truck driver, married and the father of a four-year-old son, wiped out 30 Japanese in a matter of 10 to 15 minutes.

One battalion had been pushed off a strategic 450-foot hill in southern Okinawa twice, with heavy casualties. The Japs had everything up there, the eight-day battle had become stalemated, and advances past the hilly front were impossible. The Nips continually beat back our attacks and not a yard could be taken without excessive casualties. Well dug in, their positions were heavily fortified and they

had enough supplies to hold off a whole division.

Only 14 of 44 remain. A platoon of G company, 32nd Infantry, charged the treacherous slope twice, and twice fierce enemy resistance threw them back, only 14 men remaining of the original 44-man platoon.

Late that day, the 32nd Platoon looked a crack at the hill with the same futile results, more casualties, and not so much as a dent in the enemy lines.

It was too tough. After six days of assaults with all manner of weapons and every kind of support, but without gains, the 32nd's G company, together with F company's 3d Platoon, rushed the hill on the left side while the 1st Platoon drove up its right side.

It was the old familiar story: murderous machine-gun fire, mortars and a hail of Japanese grenades. Our men had to fall back—with apologies to no one.

He Was Getting Sore
But one man refused to fall back this time. Pfc. Craft was getting sore, and he not only re-

Okis Coast In Sight
Corsairs Hit
Jap Reveals Herald End Of Defense

By now the Japs were so confused they didn't know whether to run or fight—or even which end was up. Craft set them bottom-up just for sneaking and went on.

In his death-dealing march he hoisted his M-1 four times while catting, killing and directing the fire of his now advancing company.

All his buddies had ringed the beach and well—any or all of them—littered the hill when things Clarence did.

By this time, almost all of the frightened Japs had taken to the caves for protection from the sun. But they reckoned without Craft, who was not quite finished for the day. He followed them and slipped up beside a cave where he took a satchel charge, lit it, and tossed it in.

After sending a few minutes for the explosion, which did not come, he went in after it. Bringing it out, he reloaded it and tossed it in again. As he stepped back, there was a helluva blast. The mouth of the cave collapsed and was sealed forever more.

He Wasn't Battered
Forty-eight Japanese bodies, those knee-mortars, three machine guns, about 80 rifles and ammunition littered the hill when the fight was over. Craft himself fired five clips of rifle ammunition and three 45 grenades. He estimated he killed 25 Japanese with rifle fire and the remainder of his personal bag of 30 with grenades.

Afterwards, Lt. Roy L. Barnes, G Company's executive officer, summed up just about every one's feelings when he exclaimed: "I couldn't help but think that the fighting foot was determined to get out in the Army, either by way of a Congressional Medal of Honor or by dying."

Craft says calmly: "I wasn't crazy or rattled. I knew what I was doing all the time."

Deadeye Reunion 2015 Photos



Reunion photos compliments of Joe Boyack



Deadeye Reunion 2015 Photos



Back Row: Shirley Kots, Bev Johnston, Catherine Baran, Ruth Siefert, Betty Bourgeois
Front Row: Bernice Caspers, Judy Beckman, Faye Simmons, Elsie Moroz, Fran Huff



Back Row: Jim Collins, William Deel, W. C. Draper, Calvin Clements, Orville Caspers, Marvin Reames, Bob Siefert, Paul "Rusty" Johnston, Roman Klimcovicz, Bill Beckman, James Foster, Charles Cebuhar, Harvey Webb
Front Row: Joe Gonzales, Glenn Stewart, Ray Radzivila, Nels Olsen, Howard Bentley, Don Dencker, Virgil "Bub" Simmons, Michael Moroz, Peter Bourgeois, John Cramer, James Causey, John Baran, Raymond Strenski



Reunion photos compliments of Joe Boyack





Deadeye News & Features

The author of this poem, written in 1945 right after "the raging hell," is a 90-year-old veteran of the 96th Infantry Division.

Now living in Oakland, Calif., Beckman attended his first-ever reunion in New Orleans this year and he and his wife, Judy, plan to attend the 2016 event in Washington, D. C. He had not heard of the reunions until last year.

"I wrote 'Okinawa' after the horrendously brutal fighting on that island while staging for the invasion of Japan in July 1945," said Beckman. "While I was part of many battlefield operations, I had been very personally in the middle of the many-days-long attack on Shuri and that, if anything, might have been a catalyst to my thoughts."

He had been inducted into the Army in early 1943, shortly after his 18th birthday. After basic training in Camp Roberts, Calif., he was sent to the ASTP program at UCLA. Beckman reported to the 96th at Camp White, Ore. In January 1944 and was assigned to the 2nd Battalion Intelligence squad (S2) 382nd. After special training at Camp Luis Obispo and Camp Pendleton, he sailed with the division from Camp Stoneman in July 1944.

Beckman was in the first wave in the invasion of Leyte and did intelligence operations in Samar and Mindoro. He was promoted to staff sergeant while on Okinawa and found himself "almost daily in the field" by himself.

Beckman received a bronze star (for action in Leyte) and two purple hearts before sailing home in January 1946. He attended the University of California at Berkeley, obtaining a degree in business administration.

The Beckmans have five children.

Okinawa...

A Poem by Deadeye William A. Beckman, 1945

*The moon rides high in a midnight sky
While cannons boom and roar;
And the screaming shells like imps from hell
Released from the devil's door
Tear up the ground with fearful sound
On hill and valley floor.*

*In the lurid glare of the rocket flare
The shadows rise and fall;
A rifle's gleam is faintly seen,
Then a warning whispered call;
Cautions and quick a breech bolt's click,
And the whine of a sniper's ball.*

*And foot troops charge a fortified hill
In anger, fear, and hope,
With clanking monsters belching flame
And murderous steel and smoke,
Side by side in a swage tide
Till the foeman's line is broke.*

*Remembered names of bloody fame
Are names like Kakazu,
And men still tell of the raging hell
When the frontline troops stormed through
And broke the spine of the Shuri line
And the fight at Yonabaru.*

*The big escarpment worst of all,
A challenge grim and bold;
A frowning battlemented cliff,
Where scarce a fly could hold
Was scaled with nets and blood and sweat
While the crossfire cracked and rolled.*

*Crimson names on the map of war,
And stubborn strongholds all,
Written in the flame and blood and fame
In future history's halls;
And free men's minds will mark the time
And place of an Empire's fall.*

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President's Report

DON KLIMKOWICZ, PRESIDENT
96th Infantry Division Deadeye Association

We just concluded another successful reunion and I want to thank Diane O'Brien - Reunion Coordinator; Glenn Stewart - Memorial Service Coordinator/Chaplain and this year's Banquet Speaker; Don Dencker - History Room Coordinator/Historian; Joe Boyack - Photographer, Mary Eleanor Wood Smith - Women's Luncheon Host; and Jim Causey - this year's Memorial Service Speaker, for all their efforts!

Board meeting summary: The board approved nominations for three year terms for Bub Simmons, Dennis O'Brien, Joe Boyack, and me. Scott Buffington, Dispatch Publisher reported there were 972 spring Dispatches mailed. Diane O'Brien, Membership Coordinator, reported there were 51 new or renewed Association memberships added since the last board meeting in February. Dennis O'Brien, Treasurer, reported the Association and Heritage Fund are in good financial standing with approximately \$20,000 and \$13,000 in the bank.

We discussed next year's reunion in Washington DC, which will be coordinated by Ann Moroz Duncan. We agreed the 2017 reunion will be held in Minneapolis, Minnesota since the Ft. Snelling monument dedication last year drew so many and there is a significant number of Deadeyes and Deadeye families in that part of the country. The last reunion in Minneapolis was 1965 and St. Paul 1984.

If you attend the reunion, please register by the deadline. Late registrations cause a significant amount of extra work. For example, some who wanted to attend the banquet couldn't since we were unable to change the banquet room location with the hotel due to late registrations.

As always, it is a privilege and an honor to serve you and I look forward to seeing many of you next year in Washington, DC!

Deadeye Dispatch Change of Address Form

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Diane O'Brien, PO Box 34, Trempealeau, WI 54661-0034
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ENTRY FORM FOR DEADEYE SCHOLARSHIP

Name _____

Deadeye Connection _____

His Regt. _____

His Company _____

Plans for Future Education:

College _____

Tech School _____

Career Education _____

The applicant should present a 3-7 typewritten page essay that could be printed in a local newspaper or given as a speech to educate non-Deadeyes on the influence of the men who served their country in military service and then as productive members of their individual communities.

Here are some questions which could be answered via the essays:

- Do you know the reason for the term "Deadeyes"?
- Where did they fight?
- Can you find those sites on a map?
- Can you describe their strategic importance?
- What was their importance in the ending of the war in the Pacific?
- Are you aware of any "buddy" friendships your Deadeye maintained over the years?
- Can you relate a story that your Deadeye shared with you or your family?
- What are the ribbons and medals these soldiers received?
- What does the Presidential Unit Citation mean?
- How would you express, in one sentence, your appreciation to these men?

(Contributions to the Scholarship Fund are welcome).

ONLINE 96th SITES

- The name of our website is: "96th Infantry Division Deadeyes Association" and the address is: www.96thdeadeyes.org
- The name of the Facebook Group is: "96th Division Deadeyes."
- Another good site that has a lot of historical information is: "Remember The Deadeyes" and the address is: www.rememberthedeadeyes.com/

On our Association website, the best source is the Home Page. There are numerous links in the "History of the 96th Infantry Division" section on the upper left side of the page. It provides details about the battles and other WWII info. Below the History Section is a link to "Recommended Reading" which is a list of books Don Dencker compiled that are related to the 96th. Also on the Home Page is a link to "Soldiers' Stories" which is mostly individual recollections.

Deadeye Dispatch Change of Address Form

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City _____ State _____ Zip _____	City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____	Phone _____
Email _____	Email _____

Let's honor and support the 96th Division Deadeye Dispatch

We have not heard from many members of our Deadeye families for a long time! We currently have over 1,000 names on our mailing list and spend over \$1,200 per year sending out the Deadeye Dispatch. The Association is seeking donations to support the Dispatch mailings; your support is always welcome and appreciated.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

(Please include email address) _____

Phone: _____ Cell _____

(Phone and email will only be used if we need to contact you --The 96th Infantry Division Association is committed to respecting and protecting the privacy of its membership)

Please accept my donation to help cover the cost of the Dispatch and the 96th Infantry Division Deadeye Association: \$ _____

Please designate if this gift is in honor/memory of one of our beloved Deadeyes:

- **In Honor or Memory of _____**

Checks should be made payable to the:

96th Infantry Division Deadeye Association
c/o Dennis O'Brien
6800 S Strand, #585
Yuma, AZ 85364
(winter address October to April)

THANK YOU!!





Deadeye News & Features



96th Kelley received Medal of Honor

Submitted by Don Dencker

Ova "Art" Kelley, a private in the 96th Division, was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his heroic action on Leyte in the Philippines.

Kelley, a native of Missouri, was wounded there on Dec. 8, 1944 and died two days later.

His award notes that before dawn near an enemy-held airfield, his unit was pinned down.

"At this critical moment, Pvt. Kelley, on his own initiative, left his shallow foxhole with an armload of hand grenades and began a one-man assault on the foe. Throwing his missiles with great accuracy, he moved forward, killed or wounded five men and forced the remainder to flee in a disorganized rout. He picked up a M-1 rifle and emptied its clip at the running Japanese, killing three. Discarding this weapon, he took a carbine and killed three more of the enemy. Inspired by his example, his comrades followed him in a charge which destroyed the entire enemy force of 14 enlisted men and two officers and captured two heavy and one light machine guns. Pvt Kelley continued to press the attack on to an airstrip where sniper fire wounded him...."

Kelley was born March 2, 1914, son of Jacob Edward and Viola Crass Owens Kelley. He had married Cleo Chadwell in 1933.

"One word changed human history"

This article appeared in The Oconee Enterprise and is reprinted with permission.

The Oconee Enterprise, Watkinsville, Georgia, 2015.

By William H. Hale Jr., Athens, Ga.

A story so powerful it is staggering to the mind is told in several post-world war books.

One word was misunderstood.

The course of human history and the future of the planet were altered forever.

In our history, many decisions have been made based on misinformation. None have had the consequences of a word used in a communication between the United States and the Empire of Japan in 1945.

On that night of Aug. 10, 1945, I was seated in an outdoor theater on the island of Okinawa watching a Marx Brothers movie. I was a private first class in the Army assigned to a heavy weapons company. The war was not yet over, but the Battle for Okinawa was over. Using maps of Japan in order to familiarize us with the country, we were training for an invasion in the fall of 1945.

All of a sudden the film stopped. A colonel walked on to the platform and said, "Gentlemen, I want to inform you that the U. S. Air Force has dropped two mystery bombs on Japan. They have surrendered. THE WAR IS OVER!"

The next three hours on that island were war-is-over pandemonium! We were going home! The sky was a constant burst of rifle, gun and cannon fire. Men were running around in wild disarray; some were openly praying, others unashamedly weeping,

Still others were shouting and drinking anything they could find.

Those mystery bombs were two atomic bombs. Just 900 miles north two cities--Hiroshima and Nagasaki--were gone. Two cities and 200,000 humans were burned to a crisp in seconds. The human carnage would never have occurred if one word had not been misinterpreted.

The world's science communities knew that atomic weaponry was being pursued by several major nations. In fact, we now know it was a life-and-death race between the Allied powers and the Axis powers. The United States got there first. We tested and then dropped the bombs on Japan but not before warning the Japanese--"unconditional surrender or the bombs."

When that diplomatic communiqué reached the Japanese government the emperor was in a four-day retreat for ancestral worship and could not be disturbed. They sent a message back in which they used the word mokusatsu. Japanese diplomats said they



needed to delay their response. The bombs were dropped.

Mokusatsu has two meanings--delay or ignore. The Allied interpreters read the meaning as ignore. The rest is a very sordid tale in the history of the world and words.

One word misinterpreted put the human race on a different journey.

(William H. Hale lives in Athens, Ga. with his wife, Helen. Before he retired he was a teacher, school administrator, professor and television producer. Reprinted with permission of The Oconee Enterprise. 2015.)



Twice each year, the 96th Infantry Division Deadeye Association produces this newsletter. The association would like to find someone to help lay out and design the Deadeye Dispatch. If you have computer design skills and want to volunteer some time and be part of this effort, please contact Scott Buffington at scott@mainstreetnews.com or 706-621-5685.



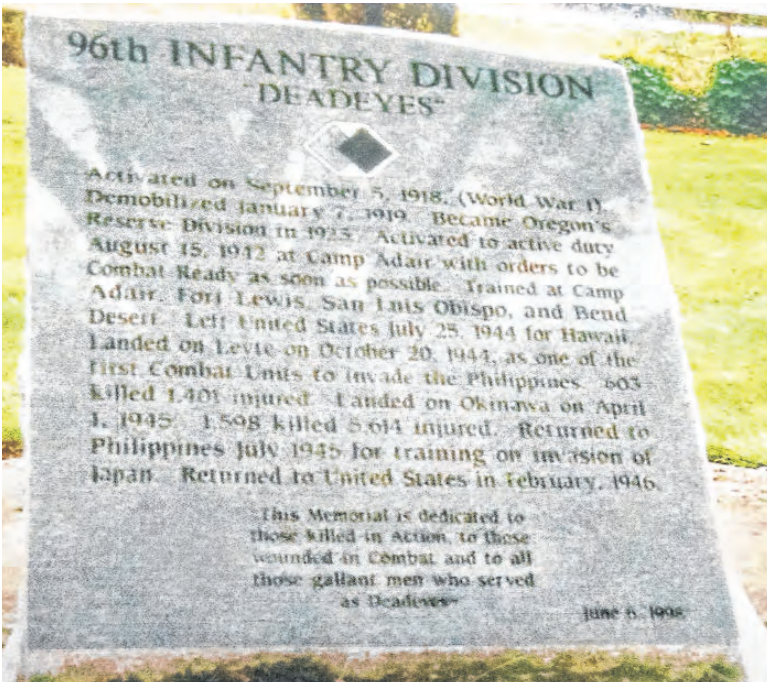
Deadeye News & Features



96th Infantry Division (World War II) at Camp Adair, Oregon

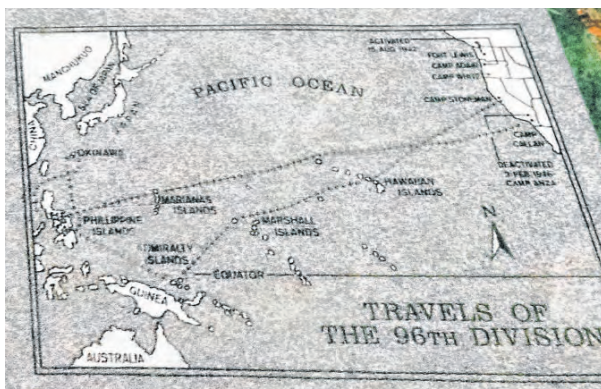
Submitted by Don Dencker

The 96th Infantry Division was activated at Camp Adair, Ore., on Aug. 15, 1942. This started the influx of men to be trained to create an effective infantry combat unit to be sent overseas to fight our World War II enemies. In addition, three other infantry divisions were trained at Camp Adair. They were the 91st, 70th and 104th infantry divisions. A sign at Monument Park at what was a 1942 entrance to Camp Adair shows four segments with the insignia of the four divisions. All four of the divisions have nice monuments there. The other three divisions went to the European Theater of Operations.



FRONT—The front of the 96th Division monument tells of the division's actions during World War II.

BACK—The back of the monument illustrates the travels of the 96th Division.



Maj. Louis Reuter Jr., Co. G, 381st Reg. Monument for 96th Infantry Division soldier

Submitted by Don Dencker

I have prepared several articles about the 96th Infantry Division, but this is the first article about a 96th Infantry Division soldier monument. Major Louise Reuter Jr., commanding officer of Company G, 381st Infantry Regiment, was seriously wounded on Okinawa on May 13, 1945.

Captain Reuter was awarded the Silver Star Medal and Oak Leaf thereon, the Combat Infantryman badge and lesser awards.

His monument is in Richwood, N. J. It was built from money donated by men who served under Captain Reuter in Company G on Leyte and Okinawa.

His Sister's Story

By Frieda Bilewicz

Captain Lou Reuter always led his men into battle. He was seriously injured May 13, 1945. For weeks, he lay in Hawaii in critical condition, unable to walk, talk or write. Because he was unable to communicate, the chaplain showed him a map of the United States and asked him to nod his head when he pointed to his home state. Then a map of New Jersey was brought and he nodded his head when the chaplain read the word "Richwood." Now Mother could be notified of his condition. He was transferred to Virginia, where I took Mother to see him. Though Mother had been told his leg was injured, when she walked in his room only God could give her the strength and courage for what she saw. Part of his brain had been blown away, he was yellow with jaundice, unable to speak, walk or write and weighed less than 100 pounds. Louis's sister, Caroline, was an Army nurse and was transferred to the same hospital. She witnessed the surgical implantation of a plate in his head and had the privilege of assisting in his rehab. Louis's doctor told me that he was the only one he knew who had survived such a

serious injury and it could only be attributed to his determination to survive and recover. Lou unrelentingly wanted to continue to serve his God and his country. After he was discharged from the Army, Lou returned home and rehabilitated at Glassboro State College, learning to read and write for the second time in his life.

More on Capt. Reuter

During the morning, Capt. Louis Reuter Jr., G Company commander, and two of his men made a cautious exploration of one cave. From far down the passage they could see a faint beam of light. Farther in, a vertical shaft ran down into the bowels of the cliff, with passages running off at three levels. Moving through a passage to the right, they found a large room hollowed out of the rock. It was an ideal observation post with an unimpaired view of the landing beaches and most of the terrain the Americans had fought over in the last month. (Field glasses and other artillery fire direction equipment found here



was later used to good effect by the 361st Field Artillery Battalion.)

Here, obviously, was one facet of a completely integrated fortress, linked by innumerable tunnels and containing facilities for housing a large number of troops. Captain Reuter left with the feeling that the Japs could live indefinitely inside the cliff---quite possibly there was a tunneled connection with the barracks. The same



Major Louis Reuter Jr.

day, Sgt. Harlan Stretch, whose platoon had spent the night on some rocks high on the escarpment, reported to Captain Reuter that he had heard "Jap gibberish" from within the cliff all night, and had seen faint streams of light.



Deadeye News & Features

THE RIFLE COMPANY: Don Dencker's 2001 Memorial Service Address



*By Don Dencker
Co. L, 382nd, Infantry Division
July 28, 2001, Omaha, Neb.*

.....Most of the men who served in the 96th Infantry Division were infantrymen and those that weren't, admirably performed their duties in support. In most instances, this support made it possible for the infantry to move the front line forward....

And who were these riflemen? They were the main constituents of the rifle companies of the U.S. Army and Marine Corps divisions. The 27 rifle companies of the 96th Infantry Division bore the brunt of the fighting against the Japanese and suffered, by far, the heaviest casualties....

In my opinion, the truly great of our generation are those that

endured the test of combat...What distinguished the combat soldier's job from the others was that the combat soldier's job necessarily involved life-threatening situations....

Average rifle company battle casualties for the 96th Infantry Division during the Battle of Okinawa was, as a reasonable estimate, 135.9 percent. The fact is, all of our rifle companies would have ceased to exist but for two factors: Return of wounded and sick and replacements during the battle.

....It is appropriate to say something about the courage of our replacements, many of whom were spring 1944 high

school graduates. ...The vast majority of these replacements withstood the first shock of combat and performed admirably. However, the majority of our replacements became battle casualties. How they did their duty continues to impress me....

...Battle casualties varied considerably between rifle companies. According to our division history, the luckiest company with the lowest number killed on Okinawa, 26, is Co. E, 381st. The unfortunate company with the largest number of killed, at 74, is Company A, 383rd....

The numbers for total casualties for the division during the Okinawa battle range from 10,247 to 11,984. This includes battle casualties, injuries, died of wounds and disease. The total casualties per rifle company is estimated at 299 men....

One subject not yet touched upon is combat fatigue...On Okinawa, soldiers suffering combat fatigue were not classified as a combat casualty, but were listed as "Sick, to the Hospital." However, in other than designation, these men were truly combat casualties. From my own experience in L Company, I am amazed that we suffered so few combat fatigue casualties in light of the magnitude and intensity of the battle. ..I could find no more than 21 probable or possible combat fatigue cases.... Some figures I have indicate an average of about 23 per company....

How could the men of the rifle companies and their attached medics carry on day after day in the face of such fierce casualties? The answer has been sought by many but it is simply "brotherhood." One's combat buddies were in effect one's "brothers" in the same dangerous situation as the man himself. One developed the feeling that

THE RIFLE COMPANY

one could not let one's buddies down. To falter, hesitate or mangle meant letting down buddies, something foreign to most combat men. ...

...The recent, long-delayed award of the Presidential Unit Citation, our nation's highest award to a military unit, to the 96th Infantry Division for extraordinary heroism and gallantry in action against the Japanese in the

conquest of Okinawa represents some measure of credit due the men of our division for the trial by fire and our perseverance on Okinawa. Let us hope that this recognition becomes widely known throughout our nation.

...But most of all, let us remember all our battle casualties, those killed, wounded and disabled and those buddies who have passed away.



SEE THE DEADEYE DISPATCH ONLINE: WWW.96THDEADEYES.ORG

Deadeye News & Features

96th Infantry Division organization chart, 1944-45

Submitted by Don Dencker

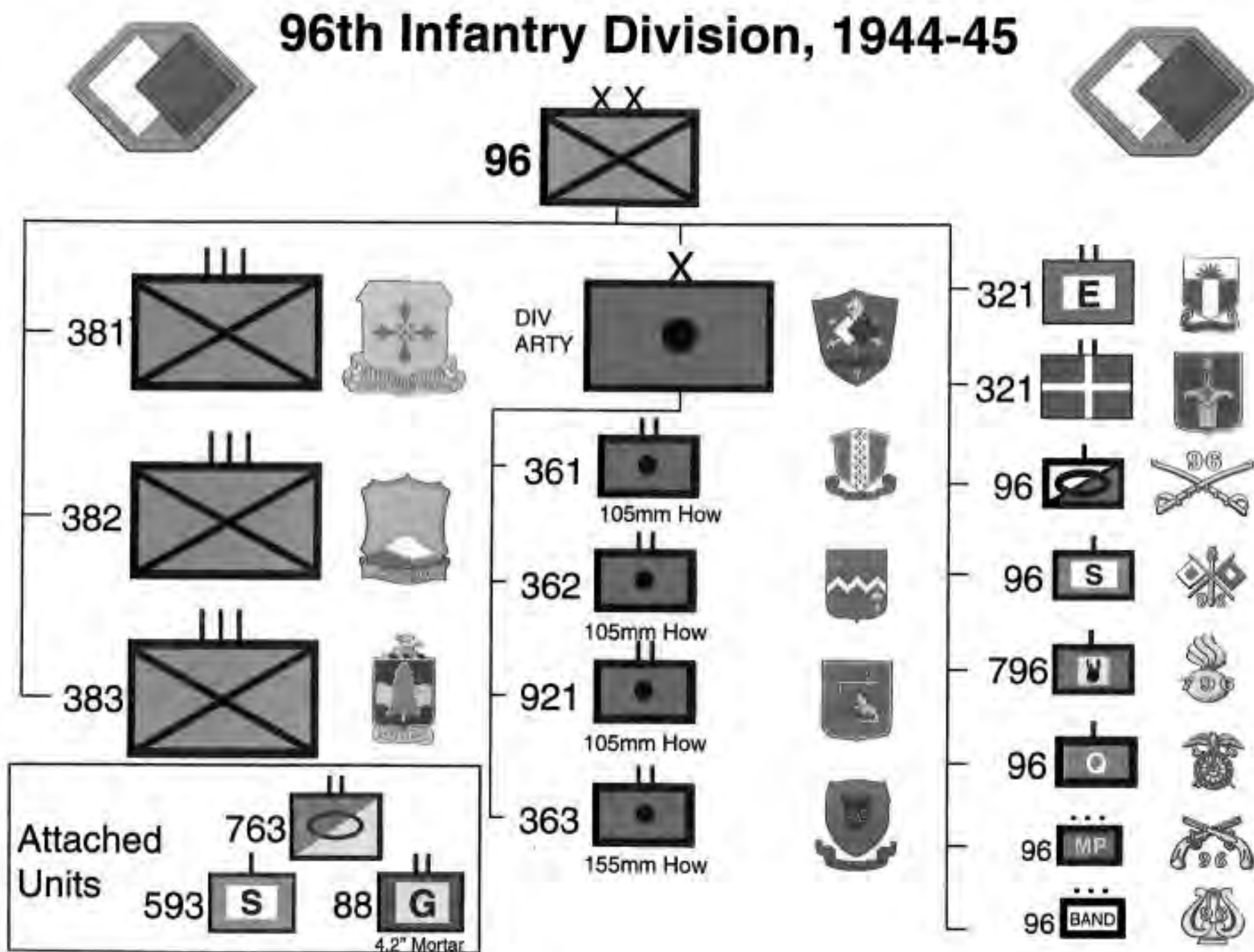
With respect to this chart, the three rectangular boxes on the left represent the three infantry regiments in the division. They are the 381st, 382nd and 383rd infantry regiments. The boxes, top to bottom in the middle, are the 361st, 362nd and 931st artillery battalions which were equipped with 105 millimeter howitzers, while the 363rd battalion had the larger 155 millimeter howitzers.

On the right are the other units of the 96th as follows, top to bottom:

- 321st Engineer Combat Battalion
- 321st Medical Battalion
- 96th Reconnaissance Troop
- 96th Signal Company
- 96th Ordnance Company
- 96th Quartermaster Company
- 96th Military Police Platoon

In addition, there were division and infantry regimental headquarters companies, plus infantry regimental antitank, cannon and service companies and medical detachments.

Units at times attached to the 96th Infantry Division are on bottom left of chart: 763rd Tank Battalion, 593rd Joint Assault Signal Company and parts of the 88th Chemical Mortar Battalion with 4.2 inch mortars.



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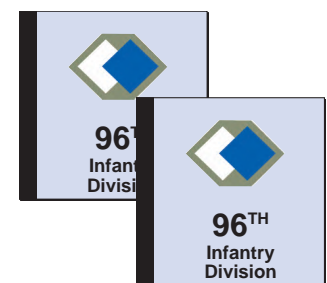
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