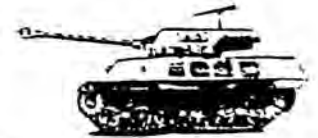




703rd Road Block



Colonel W.E. Showalter (Ret.)
Honorary President

Vol. VIII #2 703rd Tank Destroyer Battalion Newsletter June, 1997

OUR LAST? LET'S MAKE IT FINE!

Our reunion in Grand Rapids, Michigan, will occur from May 17th through May 21st, 1998 checkout, four nights and three days. Because there will be a Holland Tulip Festival that weekend ending on Saturday, May 16, 1998, and with groups competing for space, our decisions had to be immediate. Bob Schutt included Sunday in our reunion schedule.

There are three (3) other Holiday Inns in the city. Ours is Holiday Inn NORTH. This hotel has no shuttle service to or from the airport, 20 miles S.E. of the city. Dependent upon the number of people flying here, we shall provide personal cars or rent a van. Driving or flying, mark the hotel REGISTRATION REQUEST CARD at its bottom.

Knowing time and price can be most important in purchasing plane tickets. This can be done anytime up to the first week of April, 1998. Remember the cutoff date, April 17, 1998.

For a display at the reunion, please send pictures taken at Camp Polk, Camp Hood, the Mohave Desert, Camp Pickett, or Indiantown Gap to Bob Schutt, 421 Nordberg, N.W., Grand Rapids, MI 49504. Identify their names, places, dates. We shall return them, if you wish, after the reunion.

Mail the top half of the enclosed forms, the REGISTRATION REQUEST CARD, to the hotel. Send the bottom portion, the BATTALION REGISTRATION with a check, to Leonard Straub, 207 N. Maple St., Mt. Prospect, IL 60056.

"In all probability this reunion will be the last one of the 703rd T.D. Battalion Assn. as a group. The members of this "elite" organization have grown older in varied health condition. Furthermore there is the problem of getting volunteers to organize reunions. In 1994 in Springfield, Missouri, Fred Hunt led a great gathering, but no one offered to lead the next till Frank Miller accepted. He felt I railroaded him! I apologize! In 1996, again a superlative reunion near Chocolate City, U.S.A., (Hershey, Pa.). But again trouble at all levels,--there were no volunteers! Out of compassion and consideration for those great numbers of peoples I call my friends in this organization, I volunteered to plan this last reunion here in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

If this be the last show of cameraderie, let it be a great one with no excuses for not showing up! The Road Block will live on. Group gatherings will be limited to a few couples around the country. The memories will be of this last 703rd T.D. Battalion Assn. reunion. Make your memories more enjoyable by being part of them!" Bob Schutt (A)

JOIN US IN LOUISVILLE!

THIRD ARMORED DIVISION ASSOCIATION
P.O. Box 61743, Phoenix, AZ 85082-0398
(602) 840-0398

Tuesday-Saturday 9/30-10/4/97

Registration/person \$40 Each Luncheon \$15
TWO TOURS: A) River City \$26 B) Ft. Knox \$15

T A P S

"LINFORD OWEN (B) passed away, 3/30/97, approximately at 1900. Services were held on April 3, 1997 at Ste. Anne's Catholic Church,

Ortorville, Michigan. His wife, Roseanne, said that he went very quickly, in a matter of minutes. Richard and Ruth Langerveld (B), Lora and I attended the burial. There was a large attendance at the funeral service. The village has but 1200 people." Bob Schutt (A)

Dick and "Lin" used to come to our reunions together, and were together during their combat experience. Dick has suffered from a combat wound that continues to check his mobility.

Normandy Northern France Rhineland Ardennes Central Europe

"The memorial gift you sent at the time of our loss is greatly appreciated. These kind gestures are so helpful. Lin reminisced often about his time with the 703rd!"

Roseann Owen
778 Oakwood Rd., Ortonville, MI 48462

IRVIN BURRIS (Hq) was taken. Betty Jo Evans, his daughter, wrote that Irvin was felled by a chronic lung disease, July, 1996. "I believe his loneliness was also a factor as my Mom died in November, 1995. Now, however, they are back together."

She offered to send requesters Irvin's war photos of himself with friends. The Road Block would certainly make good use of them. Your battalion association will keep in touch with Betty Jo.

12106 SE 31st Pl. #47, Milwaukie, OR 97222 (503 652 1664)

DR. LEON MICHAUD (Rcn) passed on 5/11/97. He was a practicing chiropractor and author who lived in Phoenix, Arizona. He attended our reunions when held in the Southwest and we enjoyed reading his book, *Simon Was Black*. He left Fay, Lois a daughter, two grandchildren and two sisters. Ed Hoy (Hq-Rcn) gave us the sad word.

1848 E. Coronado Rd., Phoenix, AZ 85006 602 252 3664

ANGEL ON EARTH

I am getting old
Time for this story to be told.
While a tank destroyer soldier in Camp Polk in forty-two,
In the third platoon in Company "A",
Living in tents and lots of mud every day,
Long time before we got to go to DeRidder to look around.
Homesick G.I.'s, we felt out of lurch
Until we visited a small Methodist Church.
Here the welcome put smiles in our lives.
Best of all was the minister's wife.
We were the first soldiers she took under her wing.
For us she did many a thing!
On my 22nd birthday in May, she made it a special day.
Southern fried chicken, home made ice cream, and all the rest
Made that day the very best
Frank and Clair had a great time too
Enjoying her children, husband and the "Mammy"
When we said goodbye one day.
Her hug and her kiss and "We will meet again some day!"
During the "Battle of the Bulge" on a snowy day

I received a package from this ANGEL far away,
A prayer missal is such a handy tool,
Inside the cover was written "To Sgt. McKiernan from
Your DeRidder mother, HELEN POOLE."

Many years after W.W. II

I received a letter from her sister out of the blue.
She told me that Helen was very ill, beyond help from any pill.
So just before memorial day, I sent a special letter on its way

Her sister called me after Memorial Day
Telling me that the only mail she received that
memorial weekend was a letter from me.

I cried and said a special prayer
For this angel who was soon going up there.

My 77th birthday will soon be here
Wonderful memories of that angel who gave me so much,
Love, happiness and good cheer!

Don McKiernan (A)

EVER CONCERNED FOR ALL OF US

EDNA CLARK (A, Hq,) appreciated our check
" and for being so nice to me and Paul over
the years. He loved seeing every one at the
reunions, but he wasn't able to make them
after St Louis. Thank the association for me.
Take care of yourself."

Edna sent the clipping on Paul's death. He
was 78, ill after suffering from Alzheimer's
Disease. Most of his life was spent in
Sherman, Texas. He had retired in 1987 after
working for 35 years with the Sherman
Foundry, Besides his wife, Edna, he left a
son, daughter and sister.

GLENNA MURRAY (A) returned our check,
thanking us for all the Road Blocks she will
receive in the future. "I always enjoy read-
ing it. I also want to thank many of you for
the many letters and cards of condolences we
received during Clair's illness and death. It
meant a lot to both of us. May you all have a
great 1977."

MARGE AND RUSS STEELE (Div. Hq.) take our
group pictures at reunions, and have been
members of our association, and true friends.
They visited the McIntyres late February.

Though Claire may be driving soon,
"Ed, still needs too much care, requiring
help with personal hygiene, etc. The problem
is whether they can get a place to live
together.

"Mac" never complains and appreciates
visits. We're trying to do this as often as
we can (weekly). Looking forward to spring
and we're hopeful of seeing you all in Louis-
ville, keep well and best wishes."

The Showalters

CHANGE OF ADDRESS
McINTYRE, EDWARD and Claire (A)
c/o Wellsprings Health Center
8000 Evergreen Ridge Drive
Cincinnati, OH 45215

LEN STRAUB (A) sent the above items to your editor. He included a note indicating that we would do well to try encourage good fortune to visit "Mac" who really has "put out" for our welfare over the years. Len's getting radiation treatments to help him overcome the threat of prostate cancer.

"---twenty four down and eleven more radiation treatments to go!

In a more recent note, Len told us he had completed his series of radiation treatments and was waiting for the Urologist's return from his vacation.

In another note, 5/19/97, a blood test (P.S.A.) found him in the safety range, so he declared that all he now needs to recover is his old stamina! GREAT NEWS!

REALLY HAVING IT ROUGH!

Dick Ligatti (C) called after getting his last Road Block. It's a long time since then. His voice was strong,--a gutty gent you can be sure! His Lydia, despite a bad back and diabetes, was out shopping. He cannot walk, and is forced to function out of a wheel chair. His affliction is the Lou Gehrig Disease of which there is little chance for recovery now. The Lou Gehrig Disease Foundation is trying to help, and Dick will ask for their chair lift.

Dick traces his problem back to the Falaise Gap when a tree branch broke through the camouflage netting of his T.D. He never reported in as being wounded in action. It dislocated his back, but a local chiropractor assisted as necessary. He sums up his life of eighty-one years as worthwhile,-- that his neighbors have been very helpful.

It's Saturday before Easter Sunday. Maybe Dick has shown some improvement, maybe!

7590 Dorcas St. Philadelphia, PA 19111
(215) 725 1916

JOY AND ACHES!

Bill Crochetière (B) and
John Czajkowski (B)

Bill and Hazel, down to visit nearby, gave us a call. March was a month of joy what with birthday parties. The lads have the aches of their ages, but no gripes at all! John and Jennie were at the Crochetières on the 23rd of March. John has serious trouble breathing.

He was instructed to have with him a weighty oxygen device to help, but "The Barber" feels embarrassed carrying the small tank every minute.

Please help ease their nagging problem with your good word.

Wm., Hazel Crochetière John, Jennie Czajkowski
631 Mixville Rd. P.O. Box 91 Sunnyside Ext.
Cheshire, CT 06410 Yantic, CT 06389
(203) 272 4143 (203) 887 5801

JOHN and MARY BALMES (3A) are suffering very much. John's illness appears to be at a critical stage, and Mary suffers from her bout with Alzheimer's! The men in his platoon recall his leadership with praise. His Christmas yarn in an earlier Road Block, proved his personal sensitivity even in the stress of combat. The couple need our most sincere best wishes. 4/7/97

3 Belvedere Drive, Savannah, GA 31419

AS EVER, MAKIN' THE ROUNDS! 4/7/97

FRANK MILLER (A) called. "Marge's health is on the upgrade, but he's grouching about an added breathing problem. It didn't stop him from his keeping in contact with his comrades. PETER and SADIE O'NEILL (A) told him they'd try make it to our Grand Rapids reunion next year. The WAGONSELLERS (B,C) farmland was more productive. And great news, AL and IMOGENE MILLER (A) learned that Al was not suffering from suspected cancer.-- Frank's efforts to share with his colleagues brings that tone to his mood that is joyous.

WE SHARE A FINE LETTER!

"---Yolana has just started to paint a large picture for our foyer. Many of her orchids are blooming now indoors and outdoors. Our large ornamental pear tree is blooming profusely, as are our camelias, impatiens, geraniums, bird of paradise, and hibiscus."

"'Iggy' Pawlowski (3A) is in a nursing home. He has had three strokes, and no longer has use of his right leg or hand.---- Yesterday I received a letter from 'Iggy's' neice telling me that he had another stroke! ---"My cancer checkups in December were favorable."

Don and Yolana McKiernan, 4020D Layang Circle, Carlsbad CA 92008
Ignatz Pawlowski, 54 Coal St., Glen Lyon PA 18617

Don and Yolana Mckiernan

RATTLE HIS BRAINS

The March, 1997, 3rd Armored Div. Newsletter, 46, has an item in which Frank Karpinski (2A) corrects a Scranton journalist as to which outfit first got into Germany. He is no longer on our battalion association mailing list because he has not paid his dues for much longer than two years. For his response to his local paper's error he deserves to get a batch of calls and notes from "A" Co. comrades asking him to get back into our association. We hope he and his family are well. Shake him up, gentlemen!

Frank and Vicki Karpinski, (2A) 1817 Clearview,
Scranton, PA 18508 717 344 1544

A MUCH DESERVED TRIBUTE

SEATON M. PERRY (Hq.) was honored recently by the American Legion's national commander with a certificate for having maintained his continuous membership for fifty years. He once served his post as Vice-Commander. Phoebe noted that she and Seaton are looking foward to seeing us in Louisville at our division reunion late in September. To share some pleasure time with Phoebe and Seaton adds up to your good feeling they are "the greatest of folks!"

9 John St. (P.O. Box157) Heuvelton, NY 13654 315 344 7004

NORMANDY

June 29, 1944 (Continued)

In the afternoon security sections were instructed to put two men on the back of each

Tank Destroyer. Sandbagging the deck was a new chore. Capt. Cole told us the situation. It was "rugged up there"! Our battalion was needed despite the fact that only one company was fully available. Just as the three platoons were mounted and about to leave the area,-- orders changed. The men were disappointed. The taste was more for looking to end combat by "getting it over with"!

More info. Grim. Terrible terrain before St. Lo, jungle-like and tiny fields. To cut through those lovely fields, lead tanks were fitted with bulldozer attachments to hack through the hedgerows. The Germans had zeroed in on all the hedgerow openings and road junctions.

Capt. Cole, Sgt. Thornhill, and Sgt. Braud went up to forward positions. The 3rd Armored, the 29th and 30th Infantry Divs. were doing the dirty work. Later my section sergeant, Frank Woolner, went forward with Sgt. Gann and Lt. Wissing.

French civilians wandered through our area, but we knew they favor whoever is winning, and don't talk. We don't blame them, but we know that the Germans did not treat them badly, and the French underground is a farce.

June 30, 1944

We were deceptively comfortable, up at 0900, washing in a tiny stream, scrubbed clothes. Received 5 in 1 Rations (For 5 men in 2 boxes). To an extent, "K" and "C" rations can offer tastiness with mixing and heating.

There's a change in plan for taking St. Lo. We are with the Third Armored Division west of Isigny in the VIIth Corps. The terrain is a bit more open for tank operations. We'll swing south and east to surround St. Lo in the face of the enemies stiff resistance. The battalion is complete as "C" Co. has rejoined us. We may not move till Monday.

Is the T.D. Security Section worth being used as infantry? It has 7 .30 cal. MG's distributed for the 12 TD's in the company. They were secured behind the turret with sandbags. The riflemen are to walk or ride up top. The section would be divided, and considered T.D. crew members. Frank Woolner would remain as leader of the section. I led an MG section with concern for snipers, grenades. We were to check camouflage, not spare the ammo. If it might hold the enemy, riddle it! We received some fragment-grenade projection adapters so that we can fire the grenades from our launchers on carbines or rifles.

We were to turn our jackets inside out, because they shine too much. We were to wear only O.D.'s in combat. Coveralls have the color of German uniforms.

Tonight we faced a dreadful artillery barrage. Foxholes are very deep, because Jerry mortar fire is so murderous! Steinhart says that they are covered with logs.

This is beautiful country, and the earth is good. Only the people and the dead stink...

July 5, 1944

At 0240 3 July, the battalion less "B" Co., which had moved to support C.C.A., moved east to the south of Lamine just northwest of La Foret de Cerisy. We are still there with the Vth Corps. It was a slow march and deathly still. There were no snags. There are five T.D. battalions in this sector, three of which are up front to resist a central attack of tanks ("Panthers", PZKW 5's, 45 tons, 7 inches of belly glazed steel up front, and long rifled 75 mm. guns) known to be in the vicinity. As I wrote before our 7th and 8th Corps are to our west and and making only small headway.

We were in reserve in the Vth Corps area. Sgt. Steinhardt returned from a visit to the St. Lo area where he heard General Corlett, 19th Corps, call that area the "South Pacific"! Bulldozer attachments were on lead tanks, with fields so tiny that our tanks needed very close in protection. Before pulling out we logged the top of each T.D. and buttressed the sides with sand and duffel bags leaving an aperture to the rear and mounting a .30 cal. M.G., two to a platoon on flank destroyers. Security, trailing on foot, will have to man the .30's. and protect flank and rear of their T.D.'s. Damn! The minute we pulled in here the above work was nullified. But, as of the situation, we can refortify.

The Fire Direction Team (Indirect Fire) practiced today. Being north of Caumont we could move up in a couple of hours and set up for a mission. We went through LaMine and had itchy trigger fingers seeing figures in the houses. We pulled into a field, and it was crowded. We were advertising being open to air attack. Our security on guard numbered three on a post for two hours each shift.

At 0100, recently, we listened to the usual harassing artillery of both sides, spasmodic, nuisance in effect. Antiaircraft fire broke out to the southwest,--stopped, tracers vomiting skyward, and I thought rockets.--Then due west it picked up suddenly, swinging east toward us, more speedily, right at us! Suddenly a red flash filled the sky, and seconds later what sounded like a diving plane. A half mile to our north it struck, and blew up instantly. It had been a Focke Wulf 190, nothing left, and it was a score for our side.

As we stood in our holes, looking, the awful scream of the motor, the muffled crash, flash explosion, impact on striking earth was followed by the sheet of flame with the colors of burning oil, yellow, blue and green. All of us remembered to be on guard.

There were clicks of rounds going into chambers. Maybe the crew had parachuted.

At 1300 the next day while carrying a water can, all of us heard M.G. fire, then Focke Wulf fighters were coming, twisting towards us, some of our P-47's behind, west to east. I started for the ditch, not sure if I was to be the target. Some of our men stood by a tree. I was at a hedgerow. A dull thud into the hedgerow beside me made me flop into the ditch. A "slug" had angled down beside me. The lesson learned was to always be in doubt and duck.

There must have been an attack by our ground forces up ahead a little later. There were plenty of P-47's down low, and P-51's close by.

By the end of the day the "A" Company motorcycle had been turned over to Reconnaissance Co. and its mortar to someone else.

Americans are trigger happy. Small arms fire is heard any time of day. We were ordered to kill Germans, not practice on trees. Ah! Yes! We were told to salute officers when we are out on the highways! Listen to that giant bull scream over in the next field. French farmers escaped bombing and artillery by taking their families out into the fields, and improvise huts.

July 8, 1944-July 13, 1944.

Just by coincidence, it was my "Sis" Ruth's birthday when combat experience became our lot. A French lad brought us eggs and scallions just before we pulled out on the refortified hind end of our T.D.'s (M-10). Steinhart, Arrington and I were uncomfortable up there with our carbines, a rifle, and a light machine gun. Security had been assigned a 1.5 T. truck. When it was "turned in" its driver and assistant was lost to us going back to the company C.P. We were always in respect of the personal difficulties of our comrades. How would each of us behave under fire? Nevertheless a small chap in our security section left little doubt that he was not dependable. He personified fear expressed in a rising, muttering the closer we approached danger.

Our column moved west and south, the small arms fire of the enemy became audible, especially the high tone of the "burp" guns (light MG's). Where the Vire R. had been forcibly crossed at Clirel, there was the ruined village, and G.I. casualty equipment was strewn about.

We were, supposedly, assigned to "I" Co. of the 32nd Armored Regt., (M-4 tanks) however, we crawled past them on severely jammed roads with signal men stringing wire, or mines being cleared. Outside St. Jean de Daye enemy small arms fire was closer on our left. Enemy artillery was trying to register on an intersection, so we abandoned the top



In our honor at the Bastogne (Belgium) Historical Center
July 17, 1976



SEATON PERRY (Hq)



Memorial Day 12-17-1944 at Bastogne (Belgium) Historical Center
to the rear.



1st Lieutenant Francis Bangs
Henri Chapelle Cemetery
Belgium



George Toma (A)



Ralph D.F. Steinhart (A)



Paul and Edna Clark (Hq, A)



Joseph Taberski (C)

destroyer for a ditch. Our M-10's found a field on our left near the intersection. Even though we were proximate to the T.D.'s, on our minds was that our blankets and raincoats were not quite available. At the next hedgerows, the 30th Infantry Div. was blunting a German counterattack so that we were safe most of the afternoon at our position.

Now began the 3rd Armored Div. attack on Le Desert, and to be followed, the high ground west of St. Lo, at Ste. Guiles. Yet Le Desert was difficult to take.

When we started to move, again on a jammed road, it was getting late. The 30th Inf. Div. units were trying to organize in reserve. Jammed at the intersection we were "stuck" where artillery fire should have ruined us, but it did not come. Soon there was darkness. Capt. Cole ordered Lt. Henderson, when possible, to move our platoon two kilometers south towards Le Desert to join division tanks assumed there. The platoon leader saw danger ahead and moved the platoon onto the forward slope of a wooded lot facing Le Desert. A soldier from the 83rd Reconnaissance Bn. advised us not to risk going any farther since an AT gun had knocked out one of his light tanks a short distance ahead. The Reconnaissance element had moved back, and we did not know we were in No Man's Land. We had double guards on each vehicle that night.

(To Be Continued)

HARD TO BELIEVE!

May 10, 1942

Our battalion baseball team had a game in Zwolle, La. about 35 miles north of Camp Polk. Passing a village, Kurthwood, we saw a big sawmill. The workers homes were threadbare and dilapidated, a scene of extreme poverty. The ball field was out in the woods, and since it was Mother's Day, the girls were decked in flowers. I put my score book in the equipment trunk and grabbed a glove. Out in centerfield I shagged flies until an accident

occurred. About the time practice was to end, I rushed forward on the double for a short popup. Trying for a shoestring catch, I was short. The ball bounced by me. As I straightened up, I crashed into Merriman, a cocky lad who hadn't a chance to make the catch. He had come over from the left, and my forehead hit his large belt buckle, splitting the flesh just over the bridge of my nose tearing it vertically, jaggedly, and the claret flowed as though an open wine bottle had been turned upside down. A threesome loaded me on a truck, strapped my legs on the seat, driving me at high speed to the battalion dispensary from where they sent me to the hospital. Three sutures did the job, and I was given a bed. Don came over as soon as the game was over.

May 11, 1942

The nurse tried to give me a Wasserman, but with all her probing she could not puncture the vein. She tried another vein and I passed out. That was due to the loss of blood the day before. The nurse was successful.

I soon was able to write, and began a long letter to Miss Brennan, my high school Latin teacher. At lights out, others in the ward began some shenanigans, but someone squealed to a nurse on duty. One chap in my company was in the ward for a tonsil operation.

May 12, 1942

My nurse missed me for a Wasserman Test this morning. Hell! With three holes in my arms yesterday, she'll try again in the morning. In the afternoon I went to the movie in the Red Cross Building. When I got back, and I learned that my Chaplain to whom I wished to talk, had come to see me. I wanted to tell him of my jaunt to Shreveport, and he might have reacted favorably to me. When will another opportunity present itself?

May 13, 1942

Out of hospital soon after successful Wasserman, and back to Radio School.

May 16, 1942

Day before graduation. We had to do loads of sandpapering to get the "doodles" off the practice tables. At night C.W. Stewart and I went to DeRidder. We bought a pint of bourbon and killed it in three hours of highballs. Burhans showed up, and we went for a walk. At about 2330, in front of a small theater, Burhans started taking billing photos off the marquis in front. There were no glass covers over them. I took one picturing a pretty girl. A "cop" and an M.P. "grabbed" us. We spent a few hours sleeping in a jail in the back of a garage. The cells were of steel strips as were the bare cots. Burhans and I were awakened at 0430, and we were put on a truck back to camp.

May 17, 1942

With a couple of hours of sleep, we went to an impressive graduation for passing the tests at our schools. That afternoon we were sent out into the field, seven miles from Pitkin out on the artillery range, immediately on the radio for the days ahead. Living out of doors was fun. We transmitted, and received in blackout for one period.

May 21, 1942 (Friday)

I called home before breakfast. Mom and Sis were sad. Dad was sobbing,

"Can't you come home? How about officers, they want officers.--Business is good and I keep open till 12:30 AM--I work very hard. Mr. Stack goes away and leaves me to myself."

[Charles Stack was a very encouraging friend who had a "system" in deciding the winner in a thoroughbred horse race!]

The whole call was disappointing, and I will not call again!--Letters, Yes!

May 22-31, 1942

One day we worked with a Combat Command. Each company went through the motions on a problem. Actually it was key to the education

of our officers.

It took a couple of days, but I completed and submitted an application for registration in the O.C.S. program to Lt. Smith, our company commander. I don't recall ever learning how I rated.

Joe Scanlon got an emergency furlough. His Mother had heart trouble....! Joe lived to prove he could get himself into serious trouble. He was defiant of authority as if it was the only thing to do,--to force the army to punish him. Later overturned an army vehicle,--confined, no further word!

DiSalvo and I went to town to listen to some recordings he owned. He was broke, and he is an eccentric musician, dramatist, opera student.

June 1-7, 1942

We were given hints of departure. Lectures on morality were followed by desert training. Why did it take a week to prepare to pull out?

I worked in company supply, and pulled orderly. Thus I was where the action was heavy! Went to Leesville, and bought lockets for Mom and Ruth, pin for Lila, and an athletic shirt for Elliot.

June 8, 1942

It was on a Sunday morning that we pulled out. Not till 1230 did the trains roll. On Monday morning we pulled in at Gatesville, Texas to unload halftracks. We were given a couple of hours used to visit a small town, then 16 miles to Camp Hood and five more to our battalion area. The rolling hills and plateaus were awesomely impressive. There was a creek in back of our area. We set up on the side of a small, flat hill.

June 9-13, 1942

Tent patterns changed and and the battalion reorganized. There was brush to clean away, low branches to remove and unpacking. The temperature was so high that soon we were fed raw salt to replenish what our bodies lost in sweat.

Only 20% of the men could go into town (Gatesville) on the weekend. I went on to Waco. We rode the 2 1/2 Ton trucks on a cow-trail the first 21 miles to Gatesville in a cloud of dust. A good highway took us the 46 miles from there into Waco, home of Baylor University. We had left our battalion area at 1330 on Saturday and pulled into Waco at 1600. It was joyous getting a shower and a swim at the Y.M.C.A. with McKiernan, Michalowski and O'Neill. Then out we went getting a grand steak dinner, pie à la mode, a haircut, shoeshine and canned fruit juice. An M.P. "kicked us out" of a grocery store in an off limits district. We left our purchases (juices, iodine, fingernail polish for chigger bites, flashlight, postcards, and souvenirs) at the "Y", and headed for a jukebox dance at the U.S.O. We remounted our trucks at 0130 Sunday morning, and pulled into our company area at 0400, a tired crew.

On a Saturday Lt. Smith, our C.O. received his Captain's rank, and thanked us for the help we had given him. Col. Yeomans, our battalion C.O. made one of the speeches.

June 13-28, 1942

We were told that we would soon have the type of equipment that we would use in action, the best at Camp Hood, and would be giving demonstrations to help train T.D. units. Camp Hood was the training base for outfits preparing for anti-tank missions. So did we on 6/23-25/42 in two phases.

Observer point was at Robinette Point two miles from camp. The 818th T.D. Bn. sent five destroyers to act as the enemy tanks. In the first phase our T.D.'s moved forward heedless of danger, and the psuedo tanks drove them back. In the second phase our T.D.'s moved into position according to logical T.D. tactics, camouflaged, and with security on the flanks of our T.D.'s "well up"! The enemy was stymied in their advance.

We were confident that we were going to California for intensive desert training. That would not occur till early August. For

some reason your editor stopped writing his diary. He again began, August 9, 1943 at Indiantown Gap just about the time we prepared to leave for our English experiences at Mere in Wiltshire. You have read all the diary containing those events in the Road Blocks. [*Long Live The Queen*]

Further events at Camp Hood, on the Mohave Desert of Southern California, Camp Pickett in Virginia and Indiantown Gap, Pa., from the late summer of 1942 to late summer, 1943, as best I can will continue in the next issue. Any recollection of incidents that you experienced would be appreciated for that year or anytime as long as it will recall our army memories, the part the men of the 703rd T.D. Bn. played in the Second World War.

 To Be Continued.

I DO NOT LIKE THEE, INFANTRY!

I do not like thee, Infantry.
 Queen of battles, you may be,
 But slogging in mud is not for me.
 So I do not like you, Infantry.

And artillery, you are not my choice,
 You with your cannonading, booming voice,
 That deafens us, and or worse.

Artillery you are not my choice.
 I do not like thee either, tanks,
 I hate your noisy, smelly ranks.
 Sauna in summer - cold winter flanks,
 Armored Corps for me - No thanks.

What can I say of the Engineers
 Building bridges in swamps up to your ears
 Working 390 days of the year,
 I want you not, Engineers.

If war again spreads its plight,
 I really do not want to fight!
 Dear Lord above, I claim the right
 To watch it all by Satellite!

"Hap" Paulson (C)

SICK, LAME AND LAZY

Sick call in the Army
 Was an experience to miss.
 When we fell out at Reveille
 First Sergeant would say this,
 "All you sick, lame and lazy
 Sign up for sick call now,
 The Medics better find something wrong
 Or you'll really be sick I vow!"
 It matters not what ailed you
 The treatment was always the same.
 You soaked your hurt in Epsom Salts,
 Or swallowed a dose of the same.
 My first experience on sick call
 Came when I was just a recruit.
 The Induction Center was tent city
 Where I was in snow from head to foot,
 The latrine in a tent on a windswept plain
 Was a change from civilian ways.
 Not just my body, but my bowels froze up,
 And didn't move for days.
 So I tried my luck on sick call.
 All I wanted was a laxative,
 But the Doctor looked down his nose
 And said, "Here's the advice I give,
 Keep eating your three meals a day.
 (And in this you can put your trust)
 If you eat enough, soldier boy,
 You'll either defecate or bust!"
 "Hap" Paulson (C)

TO SWEET "MOM"!

Dear Mother, 22 April 45
 Saw a swell movie last night, "Meet Me In
 St. Louis". Don't miss it!
 Thought loads of you last night, you and
 Pa. Not because I hadn't had a letter from
 you in a month. They are waiting for me up at
 the company, but I've been remembering all
 the good times we had and the bad. The touch
 of your hand, your instinct always better
 than mine, the swell way you looked at those
 swell weddings we could go to--- and how I
 argued when you tried to tell me things you
 couldn't explain, and I couldn't understand.
 This is a swell Sunday and it is Spring.

Everywhere cleanliness can be found. We have
 a swell place in which to live after we
 cleaned 'er up! The German people must not
 have known how fortunate they were, to have
 given up all this, and go to war. There are
 mothers, too, but no sons, young women, too!
 Just watching the town I've decided that I
 wouldn't want to serve in any army of occupa-
 tion, here. It has to be done, but I'd prefer
 the Japanese in war, to guarding German women
 and children, and I'll never be able to
 explain why to you! We don't talk to them--we
 don't help them or feed them, but this is
 their home,--we are strangers and unwelcome.
 Right or less than right, basically we should
 not be here. Home is the place for us. That's
 what we are fighting for.--So I blow you a
 kiss, and hope I can get a shower today and
 smell of the Spring again.

Be well, regards to all. With all my love.

Nate

IN CASE SOMEONE MIGHT ASK YOU!

M-36 Tank Destroyer
 90 mm gun on the regular 3" Gun Motor
 Carriage. (M10A1) used with slight
 modification.)
 The hull armor thickness varies from a maxim
 of of 3 1/4" (basis) at the front of the
 upper hull to a minimum of 3/8" over the
 engine. The turret has a 3" (basis) armor
 thickness at the front, 1" at the rear and
 1.5" at the sides.
 The armament consists of a 90mm gun, M3, with
 360 Degree power traverse and an elevation of
 from -10 to 120 Degrees, and 1 50 cal. M.G.
 on a pedestal mount.
 Ammo-47 rds. of 90 mm and 1000 Rds. of 50
 cal. In addition the 5 man crew is provided
 with carbines, and the vehicle carries 6
 fragmentation grenades, 6 smoke grenades, and
 4 smoke pots.
 The vehicle has 3 escape doors, 1 in the
 right front floor and 1 each above the driver
 and ass't. driver.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:	PERFORMANCE STATISTICS:
Fully Stowed Wgt 62000 lbs.	Speed on improved roads.
Length 242"	Level 30mph.
Width 120"	3% grade 20mph
Height 107" w/MG pedestal	10% grade 12mph
folded	Grade Ability-60%
Ground Clearance 19 1/8"	Trench Cross Ability 7'5"
Tread 83"	Fording Ability 36"
Vertical Obstacle Ability 24"	
*****Cruising Range 150 miles*****	

THE THUNDERING DAWN

The dawn did not come up like thunder,
That's just an old belief,
The nights were long, dark, and lonely
Then dawn came in like a thief.
I had slept right through the klaxon's sound.
(Thank God it was a false alarm.)
Still a thundering dawn might have awakened
me,
And protected me from harm!

"Hap" Paulson (C)

QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORT

Received from past treasurer 1/1/97 5015.04
Receipts 1362.00 6382.00
Expenses 201.78 6180.26
Balance \$6180.26

The above does not reflect printing, and mailing cost of the last three or four issues of the Road Block.

OTHER TRANSACTIONS: 2 Memorial Gifts \$50; 3 Caps \$22.50;

We bought for sale, 5 Bolo Ties \$19.75.

ROSTER STATUS: Life Members 27; 1997 Dues Paid 35; 1998 Dues Paid, 2.

ANNUAL DUES \$20 LIFE MEMBERSHIP \$75

703rd Tank Destroyer Bn. Association

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FIRST CLASS MAIL



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Send to Hotel Only
Holiday Inn - NORTH-
270 Ann St. N.W.
Grand Rapids, MI 49504
Phone (616) 363 9001
Fax (616) 363 0670

RESERVATION REQUEST CARD
Sun-Mon-Tues-WedBanquet)-Thurs(Check out)
May 17th - May 21st, 1998
Check In Time 3:00 P.M.
Check out Time 12:00 Noon

No. of Rooms How Many Singles Doubles Special Handicap Rooms Available Smoking Non-Smoking

One to Four Persons in Room - Exception Being Handicap Rooms (2) ONLY.
ARRIVAL DEPARTURE TIME OF ARRIVAL

Date Date

Group Name 703rd Tank Destroyer Bn. Assn.
NAME(S)

ADDRESS *Special Group Rate \$62.00 through 4/17/1998
Phone where you can be reached. ()

CREDIT CARD NAME # Expiration Date

*These special rates will be available through April 17,1998, after which time the rates shall revert to full daily going rate!

The registration count will be tallied weekly from the hotel list of reservations.

Are You Driving or Flying? CAR PLANE FLIGHT # ARRIVAL TIME

BATTALION REGISTRATION

Your Name-----Telephone # ()-----

Address-----

Registration of Member-Hospitality Room-Museum Fees Group Function
Food, Drinks, Snacks, Plus -----\$20.00

Wife and/or Guests-----at-\$20.00

Guest(s) Name(s)-----

Banquet-----\$25.00

Send this completed form with check (703rd T.D. Bn. Assn.) to address below.

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Mt. Prospect IL 60056
(847) 253 0507