



## **103rd Infantry Division (Cactus) 410th Infantry Regiment Company I**

### ***1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Harry A. Schweikert - United States Army 1941-1945***



*1st Lt. Harry Schweikert Germany 1945*

Harry Augustus Schweikert, Junior was born in Brooklyn, New York, on July 13<sup>th</sup> 1919. He lived there with his family until 1930 when they moved across New York's upper bay to Union City, New Jersey. Harry was one of four brothers that served during WW-II. \*\*

Harry entered the United States Army from Trenton, New Jersey, on July 25<sup>th</sup> 1941. He was 22 years old. Private Harry Schweikert completed his basics (new recruit training) in the fall of 1941, he was assigned to E Battery of the 96<sup>th</sup> Coast Artillery Corps.(CAC-AA), Camp Davis, North Carolina.

On December 7<sup>th</sup> 1941 the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, located in the Territory of Hawaii. In early February 1942, Harry's unit was attached to the 27th Infantry Division. The 96th traveled by troop train to San Francisco, California. Here they boarded the U.S.S. Republic, a troop transport and sailed in convoy to Hawaii. On March 16<sup>th</sup> 1942, E Battery of the 96<sup>th</sup> Coast Artillery (AA) reached the island of Kauai, the most western island in the Hawaiian islands' chain. This convoy was the first large scale infusion of troops Hawaii received since the surprise attack in December of 1941.

Harry remained on the island of Kauai for nearly 18 months. He rose through the ranks quickly, from Private First Class to Staff Sergeant in eight months time. Harry applied for the Aviation Cadet program in March of 1943. He was approved for the program in June 1943, however he waited until mid September before receiving orders to return to the United States. Harry arrived in San Francisco on the 27<sup>th</sup> of September 1943. In early October, after a few weeks furlough at home in New Jersey, he left for San Marcos, Texas and the Aviation Cadet program.

Staff Sergeant Schweikert was placed in Squadron 3 of the 94<sup>th</sup> College Training Detachment. The course consisted of six months of academics at Southwest Texas State Teacher's College and 10 hours in dual flying instruction. He completed and passed the course on April 7<sup>th</sup> 1944.

Unfortunately for Harry, all cadets in the Aviation Cadet program that were not yet entered in pre-flight training were to be returned to ground forces. This was due to shortages within the Selective Service system and the impending invasion of Europe. These students, along with those from the Army Specialized Training Program were to be sent to line units (Infantry). Harry was sent to the 86<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, 342<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment, Regimental Headquarters at Camp Livingston, Louisiana to await an assignment to an Infantry unit. On May 19<sup>th</sup>, 1944 Staff Sergeant Schweikert was assigned to the 103<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division, 410<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, Company I at Camp Howze, Texas.

On October 5<sup>th</sup>, 1944 Harry boarded the U.S.S. General J.R. Brooke for an unknown destination. Soon after the ship sailed from port, the troops learned they were headed for Marseille, France.



*Vincent and Harry Schweikert 1941*

The 410<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment entered combat on November 11<sup>th</sup>, 1944 in the Vosges Mountains of Northeast France, near the German border. Staff Sergeant Schweikert, in the midst of a heavy artillery and mortar barrage, took a piece of shrapnel in the back from a nearby shell burst. John Quinn, the B.A.R. man in his squad, treated the wound in a foxhole they were sharing. Harry was awarded his first Purple Heart medal. In December 1944, he was promoted from squad leader to platoon sergeant and was designated lead man for regimental patrol action.

The following is taken from the Bronze Star citation awarded to Harry;

During the daylight hours of January 6<sup>th</sup>, 1945, in the vicinity of Kerbach, France, Staff Sergeant Schweikert, leader of a four man assault team, under intense enemy small arms and grenade fire, skillfully led his men forward to house known to be occupied by the enemy.

"Upon reaching the house the assault group was subjected to severe hostile rifle fire coming from the edge of a wooded area less than 100 yards distant. Fully cognizant that instantaneous action was imperative, Staff Sergeant Schweikert, with utter disregard for his life dashed amid a hail of withering fire to a shed approximately 15 yards from the house. Dusk obscured visibility to less than 200 yards resulting in the assault patrol's covering force being unable to discern the forward activities. Staff Sergeant Schweikert boldly and courageously exposed himself to the enemy in order to draw fire away from his men. Oblivious of the continuous fire concentrated on him he valiantly remained at his post to cover his group. As a result of Staff Sergeant Schweikert's outstanding courage the assault patrol successfully accomplished its mission capturing five of the enemy. Residence: North Arlington, New Jersey."

"By command of Brigadier General McAuliffe"

At the end of January 1944, Staff Sergeant Schweikert was given a battlefield commission to 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant. Historically, men receiving a battlefield commission were not assigned to the unit they served with as enlisted men. This was the case for 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Harry Schweikert, he was reassigned to Company G, 15th Infantry Regiment, 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division.

FOR COUNCILMAN

Harry A. Schweikert, Jr.



HARRY A. SCHWEIKERT, JR. is a VETERAN of World War II. As a VETERAN he is deeply concerned in the VETERAN'S problems and will serve as their representative on the Council. Born in Brooklyn, N. Y. and educated in the Lyndhurst and Rutherford Schools. Lives at 68 Birchwood Drive. Entered Military Service, July, 1941 and saw active service in Hawaii, France, Germany and Austria. Holds the Bronze Star, Purple Heart with Oak Leaf Cluster and Croix de Guerre avec Palm. Received battlefield promotion to 2nd Lieut. and later was promoted to 1st Lieut. for distinguished service in attack and final clearing of Nurnberg. Served as Military Commander of Eschbach, Austria. Is a member of Stover Post, American Legion - Calo - Sass Post V.F.W. and Catholic War Veterans. Is employed by large chemical company in Lyndhurst, N. J. North Arlington needs this Veteran on the Council.

On February 5<sup>th</sup>, 1945, while leading his platoon, a sniper round hit 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Schweikert's carbine chamber, shattering it into fragments, inflicting serious damage to his left hand. 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Schweikert was sent to the 198<sup>th</sup> General Hospital in Paris, France to receive treatment. It was there he received the Oak Leaf Cluster to his Purple Heart medal.

Though the war ended May 8<sup>th</sup> 1945, his company was still involved in patrol action against hold outs in the Austrian Alps. On June 11<sup>th</sup> 1945, Harry was promoted to 1st Lieutenant for participation in the attack and subsequent clearing of Nurnburg, Germany. He also took part in the assaults on Bamberg, Augsburg, Munich and Salzburg, Austria.

In order to return to the United States for discharge sooner, Harry transferred into the 70th Infantry Division, 275th Infantry Regiment, B company. He served concurrently as Company Commander, Burgomeister and Regimental Stockade Officer at Eschbach, Germany just north of Frankfurt. On October 9<sup>th</sup> 1945 Harry arrived in New York Harbor on the Queen Elizabeth. He was honorably discharged November 14<sup>th</sup> 1945.

After the war Harry returned to his job with S.B. Penick and Company. He entered politics,

## Sgt. Schweikert In a Tight Spot

With the 103d Division, Seventh Army, in France. — Led by Lt. Donald Paulson, of Minnesota a patrol of the 410th Infantry Regiment attacked so ferociously that Germans even leaped out of second-floor windows in their haste to surrender.

The raiders of the 103 Division crept up to a house in a German-occupied village without being detected. S-Sgt. Charles W. Orth, St. Louis, Mo., took care of the right flank. Pfc. Anthony A. Bravata of Brooklyn, N. Y., the left flank, and Pfc. William Kochevar of Minnesota, guarded the front.

S-Sgt. Harry Schweikert, of 68 Birchwood drive, North Arlington, N. J., said that several Germans from a hill in back of the house were lobbing grenades over the house "when those inside the house could just have leaned out a window and dropped them on us more effectively."

Grenades killed 3 of the enemy in the barn. BAR fire silenced the foe on the hill. Grenades hurled into the house brought forth five Germans, three on a dead run through the front door, and two out of the second floor windows. One of the latter had a white flag consisting of a broom stick and a white burlap sack.

The patrol hustled the prisoners back to American lines before the Germans on the hill could lay in on them again.



running for a Councilman's seat in North Arlington, New Jersey, were his family now resided. Throughout the war the four Schweikert brothers talked about opening a family business when the war ended. A good opportunity came their way in the summer of 1946. They were going to look at a Vermont lumber camp that recently was put up for sale.

On July 18<sup>th</sup> 1946, brothers Francis and John traveled to the camp by car, Vincent and Harry were traveling there on a motorcycle. As Vincent and Harry were about to cross the Mid-Hudson bridge they tried to avoid a parked roadside vehicle on the bridges approach. They tried to go around the car and lost control of

the motorcycle, hitting the bridge's guardrail, throwing them down onto an embankment 40 feet below. Both brothers were taken to a local hospital in serious condition. Vincent, who was driving, eventually recovered, Harry did not. He was now a paraplegic, confined to a wheelchair for the rest of his life. As he did throughout his military service, Harry would not let this tragedy overcome him. Unable to campaign for Councilman, Harry lost the election by a few hundred votes. He spent the rest of his life dedicated to helping paralyzed veterans. Harry was an influential force in the development of the National Wheelchair Basketball Association, playing on the 1949 P.V.A. Championship Team, called the Bronx Rollers. Through the years he served as executive secretary and later president of the Eastern Paralyzed Veterans Association. In this role, he worked tirelessly to assist paraplegic veterans. When paralyzed veteran issues needed a national voice, Harry was instrumental in establishing the first national Paralyzed Veterans Association, with an office in Washington, D.C. He became the associations first President. Harry was honored by the Paraplegic Veterans Association with an award named in his honor, the Schweikert Disability Awareness Award. When it was time for Harry to retire, he moved to Miami, Florida. He loved swimming and sitting out by his pool. After some welcomed time off, he assumed the position of Service Officer and

later served as Director for Broward County's, Florida Veterans Service Office. Harry worked there until his death, December 27<sup>th</sup>, 1981 in Miramar, Florida.

\*\* Harry's brothers who served during WW-II.

Vincent J. Schweikert (1921-1998) served as a Marine in the Pacific Theatre for 29 months with the Marine Fleet Force.

John A.M. Schweikert (1923-2001) served with 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force, 388 Bomb Group, 562<sup>nd</sup> Bomb Squadron, B-17 "Flying Fortress", as gunner and engineer.

Francis X. Schweikert (1925-1978) served in the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division, 505<sup>th</sup> Parachute Infantry Regiment, G Company.



THURSDAY,  
JULY 18, 1946

### Two Motorcyclists Seriously Injured

(Special to Poughkeepsie New Yorker)

HIGHLAND—Two men were injured seriously at about 11:15 o'clock this morning, when the motorcycle on which they were riding down hill at the west end of the Mid-Hudson bridge struck the south railing of the span and hurled them 40 feet to the rocky embankment beneath the bridge.

The men, Harry Schweikert, 27, and his brother, Vincent, 23, of 88 Birchwood avenue, North Arlington, N. J., were given first aid at the scene by Dr. Akey, of the Vassar hospital staff. Then they were taken to the hospital in the ambulance.

State Police Corporal Martin of Highland went to the scene in response to a radio call. He said that Harry suffered back and chest injuries, and his brother Vincent, suffered injuries to his back and chest and a severe concussion.

Corporal Martin said that as the men were approaching the bridge they came upon a parked vehicle. In making the left turn, the motorcycle swerved and crashed into the railing. The brothers were on a vacation tour of New York state.



Vincent - Francis - John - 1945