

505 R.C.T. WWII

Regimental Combat Team



3630 Townsend Dr.  
Dallas, TX 75229

DATED MATERIAL

# The Panther

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CENTRAL ZONE



## Message from the President:

### From Barbara Fortenbaugh, President of Family and Friends 505<sup>th</sup> RCT Assn:

It is with a humbling sense of pride that I take over as President of the 505 RCT Family and Friends Association. I can feel my dad looking down from heaven, giving me a hug and a thumbs up, telling me how proud he is of me. If it were not for him and the other founders of the 505 RCT Association, there would not be a need for a Family and Friends organization to step up and take over. Dad always worked tirelessly to keep the organization thriving, and it is with that same dedication I will do my best to continue the legacy. We want to keep the memories of our 505 RCT Greatest Generation Heroes alive. A thank you to the past family and friends presidents – you left big footsteps to follow.

I grew up with an 82d background ~ going to 82d Airborne Division Conventions, then Division Reviews, then 505 RCT reunions and met so many WWII veterans. I will always remember as a child hearing John Steele's duck call throughout the hotel; and shedding tears at the Memorial Luncheon with Chappie Wood's booming voice during the invocation. My heart still fills with pride when I hear Ed Sayre talk about knowing me since I was 9 years old. At that time they were mom and dad's friends, but over the years of hearing the stories and being able to comprehend the reality of war ~ that is when they became my heroes.

Some veterans came back and buried their memories. They took them to their grave, unable to speak of the horrors they encountered. My dad had his own memories and we were fortunate to hear his stories with his remarkable detail. I was lucky to be able to put faces with the names of men he talked about because of all the veterans I have met over the years. Going to Europe for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of D-day with my parents, I was able to visually see the places he fought. They were no longer a spot on a map. The stories took on a whole different perspective.

I am so thankful to be part of the 505 RCT "family". I cherish the friendships I have made over the years. As a veteran myself, it is with pride that I say 'thank you and I salute you' to our veterans.

### Airborne!

**Barbara (McKeage) Fortenbaugh, President 505 RCT Family and Friends**  
**Proud daughter of Don McKeage, F Co, 2/505 PIR, 82d Airborne Division†**

## Normandy Reports

Our trip to Normandy was great. We enjoyed watching the paratroopers jump at the La Fiere bridge area. It was very windy and we were sorry to hear that some were injured. The American ambassador took part in a tandem jump and at the ceremony at Iron Mike along with the mayor of St. Mere Eglise and the Secretary of the Army.

John Perozzi received the Legion of Honor and Duke Boswell, who was there, and Otis Sampson, (represented by his son, Otis Sampson, Jr.) were also honored.

The service dedicating the beautiful stained glass window at Cauquigny Chapel was very moving. We visited Utah Beach and the American cemetery at Omaha Beach.

The AVA sponsored a delicious buffet dinner for all of us and Henri-Jean Renaud hosted a lovely cocktail party.

Michelle asked if I would be willing to speak to a busload of German students. I agreed and told them of an experience I had in Normandy. Crossing a field I saw a very young German soldier who appeared to be wounded. His buddy had been killed and he was afraid he would be shot because they were told American paratroopers did not take prisoners. I said, "They tell you a lot of things." Sgt. Heim came up to see what was going on – he gave him a candy bar. I patched him up and we made a chair with our arms and took him to the aid station about a half mile away.



There was a question and answer period and they gave me a very nice card with all their signatures and a bottle of wine.

We enjoyed the dinner Ellen hosted for us at the John Steele Hotel.

We didn't attend all the events we planned to, but it was a very memorable trip.

Many thanks to Ron and Colleen Smith for all the driving, the Lemoigne family, Michelle, and Bill and Liz Palfreyman for all the help while we were there.

### **Duaine "Pinky" and June Pinkston†**

My husband, Ron, and I had the great privilege to travel to Normandy, France for the 68th Anniversary of D-Day. Thanks to Herb Lahout, who notified us that he knew of a room that was available in Ste. Mere Eglise, just steps from the center of town.

At first we were stunned that this opportunity was facing us and a decision needed to be made. We literally jumped on the opportunity and started to make plans immediately. What made the trip even more appealing was our opportunity to follow in my Dad's footsteps (Staff Sgt. John W. Clancy, 82nd Airborne, 505 PIR, Headquarters, Medic) who jumped at the La Fiere Bridge hours before D-Day. Also we were able to accompany one of my heroes, Duaine Pinkston, and his lovely wife, June.

The trip was long, but once we arrived we got our second breath and started to enjoy the beautiful country side as we drove 4 hours to Ste. Mere Eglise. When we arrived, the town was basically breath taking, not with beauty, but with history and my visions of what it was like 68 years ago. I could feel life, death, and pride knowing that my Father was part of saving this town.

We stayed at the Hotel 6 Juin, which was not fancy, very basic, but very clean and all we needed to enjoy our stay, located a short distance from the center of town. As we walked through the town several times over the week, we were totally engrossed by the history of the Church, with the replica of John Steele hanging from the church steeple. However, nothing surpassed the beauty of the Catholic Church, the inside was unbelievable, so much remains the same as it was during the war. The bullet holes were every where, every wall. However, it just reinforced the fact that Good always prevails over Evil. Here stood a run down, still active Church/building, but the entire Nazi forces are defeated. This Church stands as a Memorial to all that is good.

The first night in SME, Ron and I were invited to join Ellen Peters at a get together at one of the local's home. We were exhausted but didn't want to waste one minute of our stay. Jean-Marie and Catherine Lemoigne were very gracious and welcomed us into their home. We were treated so lovingly and enjoyed a wonderful meal. I will never forget their kindness and we knew and felt their thanks for what our Country did to liberate their town.

As the days progressed Ron and I traveled around in our rented car, and visited Utah and Omaha Beaches. Both breath taking and so peaceful, and again our visions of D-Day and our imaginations took over. Tears and emotions of what occurred and how many lives were lost. All the boys that never went home, who died on those beaches, it just broke our hearts.

We visited Point De Hoc, and we were totally amazed at all the bunkers that were destroyed, the thickness of the walls that were tossed around, just visualizing our ships at sea sending missiles or planes dropping bombs to help our boys climb the sheer cliffs of the Point. Left behind you find many valleys and craters now grassy, left by the attacks from our ships and bombers. This was probably one of the most shocking visuals of the war.

One of the most special days for my husband and I, was our opportunity to spend the day at the La Fiere Bridge. What a wonderful day. So many people attended, I even had the opportunity to meet the U.S. Secretary of the Army, John McHugh. We spoke for quite some time to him and several pictures were taken.



We also met 3 Star Lt. General Mark Hertling (U.S. European Operations). We saw, but did not meet, the U.S. Ambassador to France, Charles Rivkin. All these dignitaries were there to see or share in the presentation of the "Legion of Honor Award" to John Perozzi. What an emotional moment, we were so proud to see him receive that award.

While at La Fiere, we watched several Static Line and Tandem Jumps by current 82nd Airborne and other Paratroopers. Unfortunately, several were injured due to high winds. Just image what it was like the day my Dad and many others jumped at night, not knowing what they would land on or in.

Probably, one of my most favorite moments while visiting the Bridge was to see where my Dad landed when he parachuted in.

Duaine Pinkston, nicknamed "Pinky", remembered exactly where my Dad and Fred Morgan landed, to the side and below the bridge and were buried under muck by 88mm shells from a tank. Dad, finally dug out, trying to get the dirt out of his ears and he thought Fred was dead, after a little while Fred dug out and all was good. Ron and I took several pictures of us standing in that same area where Dad landed.

My most touching moment was when I visited the Memorial for the Medics represented by Fred Morgan and Duaine Pinkston in 2011. I stood there with Pinky and read the inscription and cried. I held up a picture of my Dad while my husband Ron took a picture. This is the picture that means the most to me on this trip.

The next day we attended the dedication of the stained glass window at the Catholic Church in Cauquigny right near the La Fiere Bridge, in memory of the 82nd. The Church still has services, however, no electricity. The beautiful stained glass was made and donated by a gentleman, who lives in the same city we do in Gilbert, AZ. Sorry I forgot his name, but I'm sure Ellen knows it. (*Colleen – his name was Mark Patterson*) Ron and I were shocked to know he lives so close to us.... what a small world.

Later that week we attended a cocktail party at the Chateau de l'Isle Marie, given by Maurice Renaud who is the son of the Mayor during the war. This was very impressive and we totally enjoyed the lovely Chateau, they have records that date back to 960.

Ron and I visited the U.S. Normandy Cemetery, so beautiful, so many crosses, God Bless them All.

We enjoyed a lovely dinner that was given at the John Steele Restaurant for our wonderful Vets, honoring them all.

It was an honor and privilege to be in the company of our remaining heroes. For Ron and I, it was an honor to be with Fred Morgan, Duaine (Pinky) Pinkston, Duke Boswell, John Perozzi and all the rest. Pinky and Fred were close to my Dad so they are both my second Dads, and I love them dearly.

We met many wonderful people, current military, dignitaries, and were treated as VIP's, doesn't get any better than that.

I cannot stress enough, if you are able to go to Normandy, do it. If you have a Dad that is still alive and capable of making the trip, do it with him. I would have loved to go with my Dad and have him tell and show me first hand experiences. To see his face as he revisited the country etc. Take your parents and enjoy the moment, feel the pride of what they did and the heroes they truly are. You still have a "Hero in your Mist" - be proud and remember, make notes, write stories... don't wait.

My Dad never went back to Normandy after the war. I'm not sure he ever wanted to do it again. All he saw



was pain and suffering. Having made all 4 Combat Jumps, he served his country and all he wanted to do was come home to the good ole' U.S.

I'm not sure I will ever go back either.... having seen it once, I'm not sure it will ever feel the same as the first time. I guess I will have to wait and see. Please take your Dads and share the moment.

**God Bless You All,**

**Colleen Clancy-Smith, Proud Daughter of John W. Clancy "All American", may he Rest in Peace**

*(Colleen – This marked my 10<sup>th</sup> trip to Normandy. Each trip is special and unique. I strongly encourage you to return.)* →

## **Normandy, 2012**

### Wednesday, May 30:

I left Dallas early, early the morning of May 30 and used my American Airlines air miles to fly to Chicago. In Chicago, I flew Air France to Paris thus saving \$500.00. A few days before my flight, Air France called and asked if I would like to upgrade to Business Class for 279 Euros. They did not have to ask twice. I jumped on it. So much for saving money! In Chicago, I spent my layover in the Air France lounge and was able to take care of a few personal business items while I waited for them to call my flight.

Business Class is a different world. As soon as we sat down, they served us champagne and individual cheese boards. I ate my way across the Atlantic. I am certain I was five pounds heavier when the plane landed in Paris. On the plane, I sat next to a very interesting man who spoke with an English accent and has lived in Paris for 35 years. I asked him where in the U.K. He was from. He said, "Actually, I am from Pennsylvania.". I asked him how in the world did someone from Pennsylvania end up living in Paris speaking with an accent like that. He said his mother had "the nasty habit of marrying Englishmen.". His parents divorced when he was very young, and his mother married an Englishman. They told him they were going to England for two weeks and the next thing he knew, he was in boarding school. We had a nice chat about Paris and our favorite restaurants and museums there. I told him my all time favorite museum was the Musee de Moyen Age with the Unicorn and the Lady tapestries. He had never heard of the museum and shortly after he said he had to work and we spoke very little after that. It really seemed to bother him that I knew of a museum in Paris that he didn't know of. I thought that was ridiculous. I had been to Paris many times and never knew of the museum until a friend told me of it.

### Thursday, May 31:

Upon arrival in Paris, I ran into Don Burgett of A Co, 506th PIR and his daughter, Rene, at the baggage claim. They had been on my same flight. I wish I had known. I certainly would have given Don my business class seat. They had plans to meet Ann McKendry, whose uncle, Joe Mera, was KIA in Holland. I was to meet Katie Troccoli, at the Hertz Rental Car place. Rene did not know what airlines Ann was on or what terminal she was flying in to. They were just supposed to meet at "baggage claim". I informed her there were many baggage claims at that airport. We were finally able to get in touch with Ann using my cell phone and sure enough, she was in a different terminal. After making contact with Ann, I went to the Hertz Car Rental and got my car. Then I learned that there were Hertz car rentals in both Terminal 2F (where I landed on Air France) and in Terminal 2A (where Katie landed on American Airlines). I drove over to Terminal 2A and saw my friend, Tom Colones, talking to Katie. I had no idea they knew each other. They didn't - Katie was wearing an 82nd Airborne t-shirt, so Tom approached her and they realized they both know me. I put the car in "park" and jumped out to go hug them and the car began rolling backwards. It hit another car in the parking lot. In Paris less than an hour before having my first wreck! My friend, Bob Neal, later said to me, "You should have more of them, then you'll get used to it!". I was somewhat nervous about driving after that, but Katie had a cast on her right foot and certainly couldn't drive.



Hertz gave me a new car and we were finally on our way to St. Mere Eglise. On the way, we stopped in Ranville to visit the British Cemetery. There is a grave there I visit every year - the grave of Samuel Glass of the British 6th Airborne. Several years ago, I took a random photo of Sam's grave. The next year, I learned all about Sam from a friend and even visited the field where Sam was killed. I was deeply moved by the details of Sam's short life and have visited his grave ever since. I left a home made poppy cross on his grave that my dear friend, Sharron Pike, made for me last year.

While in the British cemetery, we saw three elderly ladies around a grave and went over to speak to them. They were French. Amazingly, I was able to talk to them in French. They were visiting the grave of a British soldier who was killed in their village. Their dedication to this soldier touched my heart.

After our visit to the British cemetery, we headed out to St. Mere Eglise. Katie came with me to the Hotel 6 Juin where I checked in and unpacked. Then we went to the Town Hall where we thought Col. Keith Nightingale would be briefing the troops on the terrain walks he would be giving. No one was at the town hall, so we went to the Stop Bar and had a beer and hung out in the square. Around 5:30, we drove to the home of our French friend, Jean-Marie Lemoigne, where Katie was staying. I showed Jean-Marie the map of the St. Mere Eglise area my friend, Dave Pike, gave me many years ago. On it, Dave marked all the various monuments and memorials in the area as well as German and American D-Day positions and all the drop zones and glider landing areas. I also showed him an aerial photo of the E Co., 505th D-Day positions a British friend sent me. On the photo, one can clearly see a crashed glider. Several years ago, Jean-Marie attended our 505th reunion, and we both remembered Otis Sampson talking about that glider. They got the wounded out of the glider and Otis used a Gammon grenade to remove the glider from blocking the road. Once the glider blew up, a jeep, that had been inside the glider and they were not able to get out, landed right on top of the glider with surprisingly little damage! We ate dinner with the Lemoigne family and turned in fairly early that night.

#### Friday, June 1:

Woke up fairly early and went to get Katie around 9:00 AM. She was still in bed. She woke up and the room was dark, so she thought it was still nighttime and she didn't want to disturb the kids, who had already left for school!

101st historian, Mark Bando, very kindly allowed Katie and I to tag along with his group which consisted of 502nd veteran, Dan McBride, Tom Colones, Laurent Olivier, Ed Peters, Jr. whose father was KIA on D-Day, Jean-Louis, a French friend, Anthony, a Trigger Time regular, and two daughters of Doc Lage, one of the 506's battalion surgeons. Years ago, the daughters had given Mark all of Doc Lage's war time memorabilia and all the photos he had taken during the war. On this day, Mark was taking those women around to the places there father was. The day began with visiting the Holdy Aid Station. While Katie and I were trying to find it, we saw a sign for Holdy Gun Batterie and decided to stop there first. We met the French owner of the place and he invited us in. He had several displays with mannequins including a German communications center, a display of Captain Patch of the 506th talking with a Frenchman and a paratrooper suspended from the ceiling. He had an entire display case filled with bullets, shrapnel, and other items including a partially filled jar of plasma. It was very interesting to see and I couldn't help but wonder if perhaps Doc Lage had used that plasma on a wounded soldier. Once again, I was afforded the opportunity to try out my French, as the people here did not speak English. I managed to tell them we were meeting some people at Holdy Aid Station. He motioned for us to come with him. We followed him to a covered shed outside where a jeep was parked. Katie and I climbed on and they took us to the Holdy aid station where Mark and his group were. Mark had several of Doc Lage's photos with him - some of which were in color. We were able to do many "Then and Now" comparisons. It is always so meaningful to me to be at the exact locations where such significant historical events occurred.

Mark had the cricket carried by Doc Lage on D-Day. He told us that Doc Lage always kept his cricket in pristine condition. It looked brand new and one could clearly see "The Acme Made in England" stamp on it.



On the road to Hiesville, I was able to get a great photo of Mark holding up one of Doc Lage's photos where one can clearly see we were in the exact same location. A little farther down the road there was a woman, Marie-Therese, doing some housework. Mark showed her some of Doc Lage's photos of the area and asked, through Jean-Louis, if she knew any of the French people in the photos. She recognized her brother in one photo and when she saw a photo of Doc Lage, she said he had given her some chocolate. It was a very cool moment. We all took pictures of Marie-Therese holding the photo of Doc Lage with his two daughters. As we were leaving, Mark pointed out the house where Col. Sink had his C.P.

Next we went to Chateau de Colombiere where the first allied surgical hospital in Normandy was established. Once again, we were able to do some great "Then and Now" comparisons thanks to Doc Lage's great photos. Mark confirmed that Colombiere was the site of the famous Signal Corps footage of German prisoners sitting in the yard and bringing in wounded Americans. Mark also told me that the prisoners were used to dig graves for the dead Americans in a nearby field.

After Colombiere, we to St. Mere Eglise for lunch. Dan McBride signed autographs and Katie met someone who told us that Col. Frank Naughton of the 507th was in Carentan. Katie's uncle served in the 507th, so she wanted to meet him. We made arrangements to meet later. I later learned Col. Naughton was not in Normandie this year.

Next we followed Purple Heart Lane to the site where LTC Robert Cole led the famous bayonet charge for which he was awarded the Medal of Honor. We stopped and took pictures at Bridge No. 1 over the La Jourdan river. I also learned from Mark that where Dead Man's Corner Museum is today was the site of the C.P. of the German 6th Parachute regiment.

Then we visited Bloody Gulch, site of the famous 101st battle shortly after Carentan was taken. The success of this battle ensured that the town of Carentan would stay in American hands which allowed for the link up of the Omaha and Utah beach heads.

Next we visited the church in the town of Auvers. Using Doc Lage's photos, we were able to do more Then and Now comparisons. Mark pointed out the modern clock in the church steeple on the 1944 photo. There is a modern clock in the steeple today as well. One of the photos showed Doc Lage's medics gathered around a message board on the church wall. The board is still there today and we took pictures of his daughters by the board. In the back of the church are some steps leading to a door. Mark told me it was here that a priest from the 502nd and a priest from the 508th were talking to a French priest. As the American priests did not speak French and the French priest did not speak English, they communicated in Latin!

Next we spent some time trying to locate a house where Doc Lage and his medics spent the night. They slept on straw in the barn and caught lice. They buried their impregnated jumpsuits in the yard. Mark speculates those jump suits are still there today.

Next we went to the site on the D903 where the sign pointing the way to Baupte and La Haye du Puit is located. Mark had another of Doc Lage's 1944 photos showing a jeep full of soldiers by the sign. From the building in the photo, nearest the sign, one can clearly see it is the exact same spot.

I left Mark's group at this point as I was about an hour late going to meet Katie. I did not see her in the square at St. Mere Eglise, so I went straight to Jean-Marie's house. Katie was there as were two active duty American soldiers, SSGT Chris Jackson and Capt. Sarah McInerney. Both had previously served in the 82nd. This was the night when local civilians had American soldiers to their homes for dinner. Colleen and Ron Smith also joined us for dinner. Colleen is the daughter of 505th medic, John Clancy. We had a lovely dinner which lasted until around 11:00 PM! I love the way the French savor their meals. Jean-Marie and Katherine Lemoigne presented the soldiers with two bottles of Airborne beer!



## Saturday, June 2:

Colleen, Ron, and I went to the hotel St. Mere Eglise to see Pinky and June Pinkston. We had a brief visit and then I went to Jean-Marie's to pick up Katie. She and I drove to Angoville-au-Plain for the ceremony there honoring 501st medics, Robert Wright and Kenneth Moore, both of whom were awarded the DSC for their heroic actions on D-Day. Katie and I went into the church and I pointed out to her the pews where blood stains are still clearly visible. I also pointed out to her the large crack in the floor of the church where a mortar came through the ceiling and cracked the floor. Luckily for the occupants of the church, the mortar did not explode. The hole in the ceiling where the mortar came through was boarded up and apparently never properly repaired as the boards in the roof are still there today.

101st veterans, Don Burgett and Gene Cook, were in attendance at the ceremony as was a veteran I did not know. I ran into Kevin Distel and Brandon McMorries there. Kevin is a member of the 505th F&F and Brandon's grandfather was a machine gunner with G Co. of the 501st. I met Brandon last year. He is also from Texas and has a daughter serving in Afghanistan at present. I also ran into Patrick, Beatrice, and Marc Elie at the ceremony. The main reason I attend the Angoville ceremony every year is to see the Elie family as often this is the only chance I get to see them during my visit. We also ran into Kathy Soref of Operation Democracy and Maurice Renaud at the ceremony.

Katie and I ran into Marie-Therese, the lady we met the day before with Mark Bando's group. She invited us for a drink. We thought we were going to her home, but she took us to the town reception.

After the ceremony, Katie and I went to Utah Beach to hear Col Keith Nightingale address the active duty troops there. On the way there, we drove past a statue that looked like a soldier on the attack. I had never seen it before. Later, I realized it was the new Lt. Winters Leadership Memorial.

We met Colleen and Ron Smith and Pinky and June Pinkston down at Utah Beach. Col. Nightingale arrived with the active duty troops and we listened to his talk about the actions there.

Later in the afternoon, Katie, Colleen and Ron, Pinky and June and I went to Jean-Marie's where we met John Perozzi, Duke Boswell, Barry O'Shea, Anne Morvan, John Perozzi, Jr., and Otis Sampson, Jr. A French journalist was there to interview John. There was also a woman there who lived in one of houses in the area where John and 1st platoon of E Co. fought on D-Day. The woman was interviewed as well.

As I was leaving Jean-Marie's, Kevin Distel phoned and said he and Brandon were at the E Co. 505th positions. I drove over there and we went over the area. Kevin and Brandon were with three Dutch friends.

Next, I drove over to the B&B at La Fiere where Duke's sons and friends were staying. Father Steve Jeselnick was hosting a dinner for Duke's group and very kindly invited Katie and me. In attendance were: Duke, Katie, Barry O'Shea, Father Steve Jeselnick, Jamie Boswell, Rosie and Ralph Boswell, Col. Gary Coulter, Maxine and Hank Wagner, Mary Lou and Robert Sherwood, and Oliver Rose, a student at The University of North Carolina who has received a grant to do a video project on Duke.

We all enjoyed a lovely meal and then went to the square in St. Mere Eglise. John Perozzi was outside the Stop Bar and he and Duke were a big hit with all the active duty troops. Duke gave blood wings to an active duty soldier!

I ran into Elizabeth and Bill Sullivan, Emile Lacroix, Jerry Payne and Bob Neal at the Stop Bar. Elizabeth introduced me to Bob Murphy's cousin, Kathleen, and Elizabeth's friend from Dublin, Paula. It was wonderful to meet Kathleen. Bob often spoke of her and she is as lovely as he said she was. Katie asked Bill to sign her



cast and he wrote "Sullivan" on her toes! I also ran into Kevin Distel, Brandon McMorries and our Belgian friend, Robin Vertenten.

At 11:00 pm, the town put on a spectacular fireworks display.

### Sunday, June 3:

I attended the church service and sat with Barry and Katie. Barry gave me a small printed card with the stained glass window on one side and the Paratrooper's prayer on the other. The church service was lovely with Father Steve Jeselnick and Jamie Boswell participating in the service. Katie and I, not being Catholic, crossed our arms over our chests during communion and received a blessing from the priest.

After the service, we got in vans and were taken to La Fiere for the annual parachute jump. I love this day. I always run into friends, I might not otherwise see. On this day I saw Erwin Peters, my Belgian cousin, or so I tell him!, Irene and Ray Fary, Gina and Chris Riemer, Col. Dave McNeil, who jumped carrying the ashes of Howard Manoian, Col. Keith Nightingale, Nathalie and Pascal Hainaut and Gene Garren. It appeared to me that Gen. Hertling really got a kick out of talking to John Perozzi. Later, John Perozzi, Jr. sent me a great photo of Gen. Hertling with John, Duke, and Pinky. As usual, I was running around getting my picture taken with all the veterans. Lord knows I don't have enough pictures of me with my heroes! I saw Duke and Bill Sullivan sitting together and planned to go behind them and kneel for the photo, but they insisted I sit on their laps, so I sat on Bill's left knee and Duke's right. I was so worried I might hurt them.

Following the jump, we made our way to Iron Mike to attend the ceremony there. This year's ceremony included John Perozzi receiving the French Legion d' Honneur medal. The American ambassador to France arrived by tandem jump and spoke. The U.S. Secretary of the Army spoke as well. It was a beautiful ceremony and I had the privilege of meeting active duty, 508th paratrooper, Jason Butler, who had been assisting the Perozzi family. I believe he was the only 508th trooper in Normandy this year. I told him I am the treasurer for the F&F of the 508th Assn. and had been in contact with Col. Mennes, the C.O. of 4th Brigade. He told me to tell Col. Mennes I found him in a bar surrounded by French prostitutes!! I really laughed when he said that. What a great guy he is. I ran into him several times during the week.

After the La Fiere ceremony, someone grabbed me and told me to get in a jeep. As it turned out, I was in the lead vehicle leading the parade into town. The last time I was in a parade, I was about 8 or 9 years old. It was the 4th of July parade in downtown Dallas. Heading into St. Mere Eglise, the crowds lined either side of the street. There was another ceremony for the veterans in town.

That evening we attended the AVA banquet in St. Mere Eglise and then it was on to the Stop Bar!

### Monday, June 4:

I began the day by visiting the memorial stone to my dear friend Dave Pike who passed away in 2008. The stone was shipped over from Dave's hometown of Nottingham, England and is located on Hill 30. His ashes were spread in the field behind his stone.

Later, I was supposed to pick up Irene and Ray Fary at the Amfreville ceremony, and take them to the Cauquigny Church for the 82nd Airborne stained glass window dedication. Upon arrival at Amfreville, I could not find them anywhere. I was really worried and thought perhaps I had the location wrong. My biggest fear has always been that I would disappoint one of the veterans and I thought that day had arrived! I finally found someone who told me they had left. Someone else had taken them to Cauquigny. The window was beautiful. It was designed and created by Mark Patterson. Mark conducted the ceremony and Celine Schwab did the translation. Afterward, I ran into 502nd veteran, Dan McBride with Matthew Pellett, Boy Eyesbrook, and



Robin Vertenten. It was great to see those guys. Especially, Boy. This was the first time I had met him in person. I immediately recognized him from photos I have seen on the Trigger Time forum.

I spent the afternoon in St. Mere Eglise with June and Pinky and Colleen and Ron. We had a lot of trouble finding a place to eat lunch. We ended up eating at the John Steele. It was expensive, but very good. Pinky told us a great story about his buddy, Guy Campbell. It was at the end of the war and they were on a train that was stopped near a train full of SS POWs. There was an extremely arrogant officer and Guy Campbell began marching up and down in front of him saying, "Hotsie, totsie I'm a Nazi. You know why you lost the war? Because I'm a super duper paratrooper!".

Later in the early evening, we went to Maurice Renaud's cocktail party at the Chateau de l'Isle Marie. It was a lovely evening. The National President of the American Legion was there as well as the Secretary of the Army. There were also a bunch of French school children dressed in native Norman costumes. Very cute. A couple of French women sang the American national anthem in French.

Immediately following the cocktail party we received word that Fred Morgan had arrived. June and Pinky Pinkston, Colleen and Ron Smith and I went to the home of Elizabeth and Bill Palfreyman to visit Fred. It touched my heart to see Fred and Pinky greet each other. We had a lovely time at the Palfreyman home and it was wonderful to finally meet this lovely family. Funnily enough, I had met Bill's cousin, Joe, at the La Fiere jump on Sunday. He had a great patch on his jacket that I wanted a picture of. The patch said, "My idea of help from above is a sniper on the roof"!

#### Tuesday, June 5:

After breakfast, I went over to the St. Mere Eglise hotel and met John Perozzi, John Perozzi, Jr, John's daughter, Lynn Brubaker and her husband, Jim, Otis Sampson, Jr. and his wife, Sandy, and Renee and Gary Gecko. We piled in the cars and drove to Pointe du Hoc. It was a cold and windy day with intermittent rain, but the memorial was beautiful. I ran into my Dutch friend, Frank Mesu. I have not seen him since we were both in Belgium last February. It was great to see him. John was a big hit with everyone who saw him. We went through some of the bunkers and took a lot of pictures.

Next, we went to the American Cemetery at Colleville. The cemetery is always very moving to me. The first time I visited there, I had one grave to visit - Ray Darling of the 438th TCG. This year, I visited eight graves. Whenever someone asks me to visit the grave of their father or uncle or buddy, I continue to visit them year after year. That way I know those graves were visited at least once that year. In addition to visiting Ray Darling's grave, I visited the graves of George Schmidt (501st), Martin Teahan (508th), Turner Turnbull (505th), James McGinity (505th), John Daum (508th), Donald Myerly (29th ID), and Roy Murray (508th). John really wanted to visit the grave of Lt. Turnbull. I took pictures of him and Otis Sampson, Jr. at the grave site. Otis and John and 1st platoon of E Co. helped Lt. Turnbull and his men get out of Neuville au Plain and get back to St. Mere Eglise on D-Day. John, Jr., Renee, Gary and I walked down the pathway to the beach and back.

After our visit to the cemetery, we returned to St. Mere Eglise, and attended the ceremony at the Airborne Museum to lay the cornerstone of the new building. After that, there was another ceremony in town to lay flowers at Signal Monument in the square.

At 7:00PM that evening, I hosted a dinner at the John Steel Hotel for about 60 people. I am most grateful to Father Steve Jeselnick for all his assistance. I never could have pulled it off without his help. We had six 82nd veterans (Ray Fary, Bill Sullivan, Pinky Pinkston, Fred Morgan, Duke Boswell, and John Perozzi) and two 101st veterans (Don Burgett and Dan McBride). Renowned 101st Airborne historian, Mark Bando, also attended. We also had five retired colonels in attendance. Everyone seemed to have a great time - I know I did.



After the dinner, Kevin asked me if I would like to join him and a few others and go with Don Burgett to the place where Don landed on D-Day. He did not have to ask twice. Just before midnight we headed to the spot. Someone had a bottle of Calvados and poured some for everyone there. Don said he wanted to make a toast. He said, "Here's to the last one. Here's to the next one. Here's to the ones we left behind." I later learned that was the toast he made to his lost comrades when he learned the war was over. I found his toast very moving and I don't believe a day has gone by since I returned home, that I have not thought of his words. Being with Don at the site where he landed at midnight on June 5/6 was one of those moments that keeps me returning to Normandy year after year. I will never forget it or his words.

When I returned to my hotel, there was another American, Dennis Shields, returning as well. In just a few moments of conversation, I learned that his father, Frank Shields, was a member of E Co., 505th. He had a copy of his father's D-Day plane manifest and I saw both Otis Sampson's and John Perozzi's names. I told him, "You are not going to believe this, but John Perozzi and Otis Sampson, Jr. are here." I told him I was meeting them at the hotel St. Mere the next morning and he should come, too.

#### Wednesday, June 6:

We all met at the hotel. John was really happy to meet Dennis. Jean-Marie and Katie arrived and we went to the E Co. positions with John. Kevin Distel joined us. Jean-Marie had maps and I had an aerial photo of the area taken just after the battle. On the photo, you can clearly see where the mortar rounds hit as well as a crashed glider. Both Otis and John talked often about that glider. We also went to Neuville au Plain with John.

Katie and I left to attend the ceremony at La Fiere to spread the ashes of Howard Manoian. We arrived at the very end of the service. I took photos of Chris and Gina at the new memorial with Howard's name on it.

Next, Katie and I drove to Eroudeville for a ceremony honoring Bill Sullivan. It was a nice ceremony, but it began to rain. I gave my umbrella to Katie as I was worried about her cast getting wet. It really began to pour down, so I got the car and got Katie. We went to the Super U and bought some plastic trash sacks for Katie to wrap around her cast.

Katie and I went back to St. Mere and went to the new biscuit shop to get something to eat. Otis Sampson, Jr and his wife, Sandy, were there, so we joined them. We waited over an hour to get served, and finally had to leave to meet Jean-Marie. We planned to go to St. Sauveur le Vicomte to show Odie the exact location where his dad was wounded. On the way there, we stopped by the Tom Porcella Room in Picauville. I attended the dedication of the room back in 2006. There is a plaque in the room with the names of every 508th trooper who was killed in Normandy. There are also several water color paintings by a German soldier that were given to Tom many years after the war. One depicts an 82nd Airborne trooper. The German soldier who painted the pictures had fought against the 82nd and depicted the combat in his paintings.

Next we went to St. Sauveur to show Odie the site where his father was wounded. While we were there a woman came out. She lived in the house on the corner right by where Otis was wounded. Luckily, the families had left their homes prior to the battle. The three houses on the corner all caught fire and were completely destroyed. Several houses on the street were destroyed. One can look down the street and clearly tell the post war homes from the pre war ones.

In Otis' possessions, Odie found a postcard of an aerial photo of a site. Typed on the card was "Fauville on approach to St. Mere from Les Forges where Peddicord was KIA" Otis often spoke of Lt. Peddicord and thought highly of the man. Jean-Marie knew the location and took us there.

We returned to St. Mere Eglise and attended the ceremony at Bourne 0. Then we attended a lovely cocktail party at Yvette and Henri-Jean Renaud's home. After the cocktail party, we went to the Stop Bar. It was a lot



of fun. Duke and I were talking to Gina Riemer and Duke was telling her how at every 505th reunion we have our picture taken with Katie and me kissing him on each cheek. Katie wasn't there, so Gina told me to kiss Duke while she took a photo. I did and Duke turned to me and said, "Ah hell - let's kiss on the lips." I said, "O.K.". So we did! I ran into Kevin and Brandon along with Mike Lloyd, Matthew Pellett, Robin Vertenten, and Rob Stark. It was a fun evening. Bill and Elizabeth Sullivan were there with Kathleen and Donna. Donna met an active duty soldier also named Bill Sullivan. She, Kathleen, and I were all given berets from active duty soldiers. Later in the evening, some soldiers tried to climb up the outside of the Stop Bar. I have no idea what they were doing, but the crowd was urging them on. I later heard they got in trouble for it.

#### Thursday, June 7:

I met Mark Bando, Tom Colones, Ed Peters, Jr., Dan McBride, Mike Lloyd, and Rob Stark in Carentan. We drove to Villedieu les Foelles where we ate lunch at the creperie. Then we went in search of a 2nd Armored Division ambush site that a veteran had told Mark about. We never were able to find it, but time was limited as Mark, Dan, and Ed had to get to Paris.

We were near Mortain, where the 30th and 35th IDs fought in a huge battle there in August of 1944, so Tom, Mike, Rob and I decided to visit that area. At the top of the hill is a small chapel with an incredible view of the valley below. Today the area is so beautiful and peaceful, it is hard to imagine the fierce fighting that took place there so long ago.

Next we visited an abandoned Abbey that Mike had spotted earlier. It was absolutely beautiful. There was a French bride and groom there with a photographer having their portraits done.

I was invited to a party in Sainteny that evening and I asked Tom, Mike and Rob if they would like to join me. Tom declined, but Mike and Rob came with me. It was a lot of fun. My dear friends Sharron Pike, Dick Cooper, and Caroline were there and I finally got to meet Dick's daughter, Lisa. There was an English woman there who sang several 1940s songs. She was dressed in period attire. Lots of people were dressed in period attire. There was dancing as well and I danced the night away. There was an Englishman dressed in 1940's clothing who could really dance. I had a lot of fun dancing with this guy. At one point in the evening a very tall German man asked me to dance. This guy just lifted me right off my feet and carried me around the dance floor! My feet never touched the ground.

It was a fun evening, but Rob and Mike kept me out far too late. That's what I get for hanging out with guys in their 20s!! I didn't get back to the 6th Juin until 2:30 AM!

#### Friday, June 8:

I slept late and missed breakfast. Luckily I had some Dutch cookies my good friend, Fred Hoek, had given me. Those cookies sure delicious!

I went to Le Grand Hart near Utah Beach to ask about maybe having a dinner there next year. I was hoping to find a restaurant that could accommodate 90 to 100 people. I had 96 who wanted to come to my June 5th dinner. I hate turning people away. Unfortunately, Le Grand Hart could not accommodate that many either. Kevin Distel and Reg Jans took me there for dinner last year and it was delicious. One of the best restaurants in the area. I figured as long as I was there, I may as well have lunch. Another fantastic, albeit, expensive meal.

After lunch, I drove to the Dick Winters Leadership memorial. Quite impressive, but I really believe they should have used the generic Iron Mike as opposed to an actual soldier. While I certainly have all the respect and admiration in the world for Dick Winters, it was my understanding that the memorial was supposed to represent the leadership abilities of all junior officers, but they made it about one man.

Next, I drove to Boutteville for the dedication of the plaque to the 91st and 128th Evacuation Hospitals. I had no idea where I was going and put my faith in my trusty Garmin GPS. As I turned down one road and looked in



my rearview mirror, there was a whole line of cars following me. I was praying I was headed right - sometime I screw up even with the GPS! It was a very nice ceremony with a lovely reception afterwards. I ran into Bev and Shawn Fitzpatrick there and it was great to see them. I also ran into Boy Eyesbrook as well. What a great guy he is.

After the ceremony, I went to visit Sharron Pike and had a wonderful dinner at her house. It was another late evening. She had two 18 year old kids spending the week with her. It was very interesting talking with them. They had a million questions about the United States and Texas in particular.

#### Saturday, June 9:

Today, I got out Dave Pike's map with all the sites marked and set out to see if I could find them. I visited Brecourt Manor, the site where General "Lightening" Joe Collins established the VII Corps C.P., the memorial to Lt. Meehan's plane, Marmion Farm, the General Falley's HQ, the 508th Bridge, Chemin O.B. Hill and Hell's Half Acre where O.B. spent the first three days of the invasion. I also went by Dead Man's Corner Museum to see if Michel DeTrez was there. I wanted to ask him if he would be willing to donate copies of his books on Bob Piper, Ben Vandervoort, and Doc McIlvoy to the 505 headquarters at Ft. Bragg. They are trying to get copies off all the books on the 505th.

In the afternoon, Tom Colones picked me up at the 6th Juin and we drove to St. Malo where we spent the night so we could make the early ferry to Jersey the following morning. I got some great photos of Mont St. Michel from the car.

#### Sunday, June 10:

Tom and I met for breakfast around 6:15 in the hotel restaurant. We arrived at the ferry around 7:00 and purchased our tickets. The ferry was really nice and the trip was fairly short. Family and Friends member, Dave Mustow, met us in Jersey and we spent the day with him. Jersey is one of the Channel Islands that was occupied by the Germans during the war. Any British civilians not born in the Channel Islands, but caught there at the outbreak of war were taken to Germany.

The weather was awful - cold and rainy, but I had a great time in spite of that. Poor Tom was sick as a dog the whole day and I felt bad for him. Dave took us to his lovely home where he had an incredible collection of WWII memorabilia.

We spent the rest of the day visiting sites. We went to the Battery Moltke which features one of the original French field guns. At the end of the war, the gun was pushed over the cliffs. It was retrieved in the 1990s and restored. We also visited the naval coastal artillery battery Lothringen which features Noirmont Point where the German command post was located. These sites were part of Hitler's Atlantic Wall. At Noirmont Point there is a memorial to the men of PT 109 of the U.S. Navy who lost their lives in action off Noirmont Point on August 9, 1944 while on patrol between Jersey and St. Malo. They were buried on Jersey with wooden crosses marking their graves. Their bodies were removed from Jersey after the war, but the crosses remain with the men's names on them where they were originally buried. It is a lovely memorial to these men.

We ate lunch in the restaurant at the Jersey War tunnels. On one of the walls of the restaurant were photos of Jersey civilians who were punished by the Germans for various infractions. After lunch, we toured the tunnels and boy was it interesting. The tunnels were excavated by forced laborers as a bombproof storage and repair facility and was later converted into a casualty receiving station which was never used. The tunnels feature many exhibits which tell the story of the occupation of the Channel Islands. One of the exhibits that really impressed me was of British agent, Violette Szabo of whom I had read about in the book, "A Life in Secrets" several years ago. It was truly amazing all the things they had in those tunnels. There was even evidence of other tunnels under construction when the war ended.

The last thing we did was visit the medieval castle of Mont Orgueil which was built from the 13th to 16th centuries. As much as I enjoy the WWII sites, I think Mont Orgueil was my favorite place we visited. It was



amazing and if I had not been with Dave, I would most likely still be lost somewhere on the castle grounds! It was beautiful, but some of those winding stone staircases were a little scary. I slipped a couple of times. After Mont Orgueil, it was time for Tom and me, to head to the ferry. It was around 2:30 AM when Tom dropped me off at the 6th Juin.

#### Monday, June 11:

I was so tired, I did not want to wake up. I slept in and went over to Sharron Pike's house. She and I drove over to Dick Cooper's place. I love going over to his place. Every year he makes some improvement. This year he restored one of the buildings on the property and plans to turn it into a small museum.

I called Chris Riemer on the phone to find out where he and Gina were. We had tried several times to make arrangements for Sharron to see them and finally we were able to coordinate everyone's schedules. Sharron and I met them at (where else) The Stop Bar. Sharron was able to get in a nice visit with them.

I spent the day with Sharron and ate dinner at her house.

#### Tuesday, June 12:

I drove to the Battle of Normandie Museum in Bayeux. I had been wanting to visit it for years. Very interesting museum. Upon my return, I visited the Gourbesville Monument to the 90th and 82nd Divisions and the German cemetery at Orglandes, where I visited the grave of General Falley. I also visited the new memorial in Ravenoville, both the Azeville and Crisbecq gun batteries, and St. Marcouf - site of the famous 508th D-Day patrol which included my dear friends, Wooster Morgan, Harry Kennedy, and Jody Lander. My final place to visit was the Dave Pike Memorial Stone on Hill 30.

#### Wednesday, June 13:

I got up fairly early and drove to Paris where I met Tom Colones at the car return place at the airport. We took a taxi to the Hotel Valadon and checked in. From the hotel we went to the Galleries Lafayette, a huge shopping center in Paris. It was the Paris version of the Galleria! Tom goes there every year to buy face cream for the women at the TV station where he works. I thought I might buy some, too, until I saw the price. It must be the most expensive face cream in the world. While he was doing that, I did a little shopping myself. I bought some gorgeous scarves for Christmas presents for all the women in my family - on sale, of course! After our shopping spree, we took our packages back to the hotel and walked over to the Eiffel Tower. We took a boat ride down the Seine. Tom still wasn't feeling well, so he stayed inside the boat while I went to the upper deck. Unfortunately, it started to rain. It was really pouring down, so everyone on the upper deck went down below. It was still a fun time. Tom and I met an elderly American couple who were on their first trip to Europe. They were spending about three days in each country. They reminded me of the movie, "If It's Tuesday, This Must Be Belgium"!

The rain let up and we returned to the area where our hotel was. Our hotel was in a residential area and the next street over was a street market. They had every kind of shop you can imagine and cafes and restaurants on every corner. The street was bustling with activity as all the Parisians of the area were doing their shopping. We chose one of the cafes and ate dinner.

#### Thursday, June 14:

Today I visited the Musee Rodin which I have wanted to visit for years. In the past, my time in Paris has always been so brief, I always arrived at the museum an hour before closing and they have stopped allowing people to enter. My problem was the Musee de Moyen Age is at the Metro stop just before the Musee Rodin and I don't seem to be able to resist it. I love that museum. This year, I was able to spend quite a bit of time in the Rodin museum and I needed every minute of it. It was wonderful with beautiful gardens out back where his "The Thinker" statue is located. And a whole other building filled with Rodins including some of his sketches. There were also some paintings by other artists such as Claude Monet and Vincent Van Gogh. A truly wonderful museum.



Next I visited Napoleon's tomb at the Place des Invalides. I was there back in the 1980s and had not planned to visit the place, but it was so close to the Musee Rodin that I walked on over. Next I went to hunt down a couple of locations where the Gestapo had their headquarters during the war that I had read about in books. One of them was in a fashionable residential area on Ave. Foch. I couldn't help but wonder if the residents knew of their home's history. The other location was in the Place des Etats Unis and is currently the location of the Bahrain consulate. In the park across the street was a statue of Gen. Lafayette, one of my heroes, and George Washington. Seeing the statue made my day as a visit to Gen. Lafayette's grave at the Picpus cemetery was next on my agenda.

The Picpus cemetery is the only private cemetery in Paris. It was here that the bodies of 1,304 victims of the French revolution are buried in two mass graves. Every effort was made to consign these tragic events to oblivion, however the daughter and sister of two of the victims secretly followed a cart carrying the bodies to the site. Family members of the victims met secretly and bought the enclosure containing the graves. They decided to turn it into a place of meditation and prayer. They built a small chapel and solicited the Sisters of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary to offer up perpetual prayer on behalf of the victims. Only family members and descendants of the victims are buried here. The grandmother, mother, and sister of Gen. Lafayette's wife were victims and that is how he came to be buried here. An American flag flies permanently over his grave. During the German occupation of Paris, the Germans allowed the flag to remain over his grave. In 1824, Gen. Lafayette visited the United States. One of the cities he visited was Fayetteville, NC. He returned to France with soil from Bunker Hill and is thus buried in American soil. I also, visited the Place de la Bastille which is located nearby.

Tom and I met in the evening and had a steak dinner at one of the local restaurants. It was delicious.

#### Friday, June 15:

My last day in Paris. I intended to visit the Suresness American Cemetery today, but I was just too tired. This trip finally caught up with me. I slept really late and did not leave the hotel until noon. I bought a bowl of ice cream from the ice cream shop on the next street over and wandered around for a bit looking around the local shops. I got on the metro and went to the Tuileries and walked around the gardens and sat on one of the benches there and people watched for a while. I walked over to the Place de la Concorde where they had someone dressed up in King Tut attire in advertisement for the exhibit. I had to smile as I had just seen the King Tut exhibit in Houston two months prior in April! Directly across the street they had a Ferrari and Lamborghini you could rent for twenty minutes for 89 Euros. I was tempted to do it, but I thought if I can't even make it out of the airport without having a wreck what chance do I have driving around in Paris!

I returned to the area where our hotel was and bought a sandwich, a bag of chips, and a coca-cola and ate in my room. I called Tom and told him I was just too tired to go to dinner. He felt the same and had slept in that day as well. I packed my bags and went to bed early.

#### Saturday, June 16:

We got up early and checked out of the hotel. We had made arrangements the day before for a taxi to pick us up. At the airport we said our goodbyes and the cab driver dropped Tom at his terminal and me at mine. The airport was a madhouse, but I made it to the gate in plenty of time. I flew home on KLM. No business class this time, but I had previously arranged for "economy comfort" which is better than regular economy, but does not compare to business. The plane arrived in Chicago and I was scheduled for a ten hour layover, but I made it through customs in record time and managed to get on a 2:00 PM flight to Dallas for an additional \$75.00.

All in all it was another fantastic trip to France.

My photos can be seen at [www.eeptx.phanfare.com](http://www.eeptx.phanfare.com)

**Ellen Peters**✈



## Congratulations

Congratulations to John Perozzi who received his Legion d'Honneur medal from the French government in a ceremony at the Iron Mike statue on Sunday, June 3. The American Ambassador to France and the Secretary of the Army were in attendance and spoke at the ceremony.



Pinning on the medal



John Perozzi with active duty soldiers at the Iron Mike statue in Normandy, France

Congratulations to Duaine "Pinky" Pinkston who recently received notification from both the French Embassy in Washington, D.C. and the French Consulate in Chicago that he has been approved to receive the Legion d'Honneur medal, also. Pinky will receive his medal next summer in Normandy. The correspondence he received follows:



*Ambassade de France*

*aux Etats-Unis*

*Le Chargé d'Affaires a.i.*

#1796

Washington, August 7, 2012

Dear Mr. Pinkston:

I am pleased to inform you that by decree of the President of the French Republic on July 19, 2012, you have been appointed a "Chevalier" of the Legion of Honor.

This award testifies to the President of the French Republic's high esteem for your merits and accomplishments. In particular, it is a sign of France's infinite gratitude and appreciation for your personal and precious contribution to the United States' decisive role in the liberation of our country during World War II.

The Legion of Honor was created by Napoleon in 1802 to acknowledge services rendered to France by persons of exceptional merit. The French people will never forget your courage and your devotion to the great cause of freedom.

It is a true pleasure for me to convey to you our sincere and warm congratulations.

In order to determine the means of bestowing the insignia upon you, please contact our General Consulate in Chicago (205 North Michigan Avenue - Suite 3700 Chicago, IL 60611, Tel. 312 327 5200). Naturally, I remain at your disposal in this regard.

Once again, my heartfelt congratulations.

Sincerely,



Frédéric Doré

Mr. Duaine J. Pinkston  
1398 Knoll Rd.  
Portland, MI 48875





**CONSULAT GENERAL DE FRANCE  
A CHICAGO**

n° 804

Mr. Duane J. Pinkston.  
1398 Knoll Rd  
Portland, MI 48875

Chicago, August 9, 2012

Dear Mr. Pinkston,

*It is my pleasure as Consul General of France in Chicago to inform you, on the behalf of the people of France, that the President of the French Republic has named you Knight of the Legion of Honor\* for your valorous action during World War II.*

*My fellow countrymen will never forget your sacrifice. Their children and grandchildren are as proud of your courageous actions as can be your own children and grandchildren.*

*This outstanding distinction is the highest honor that France can bestow upon those who have achieved remarkable deeds for France. It is also a sign of true gratitude for your invaluable contribution to the liberation of France during these difficult times in the History of our nation.*

*It is a privilege for me to send you my sincere and warmest congratulations. Please accept my very best wishes for yourself and your family and friends.*

*Merci beaucoup for all you did!*

*Sincerely yours,*

Graham PAUL  
Consul General of France in Chicago

*\*Decree of the President of the French Republic on July 19, 2012.*



## **GRENADA THANKSGIVING CAME EARLY**

**by**

**Col. (Ret.) Keith Nightingale**

68 years ago, the 82d Airborne liberated a piece of France as the beginning to the liberation of a Continent. Not quite 30 years ago, the successors to those Airborne soldiers rescued another group of people equally oppressed and straining for freedom. This is their story and proof that the quality and symbolism of the Airborne soldier does not die with the soldier but lives with the unit-wherever and whenever it may be.

The 25th of October is celebrated in Grenada as Thanksgiving-a holiday created by a grateful Nation to honor the day the US Military rescued them from local thugs and their Cuban cohorts. The anniversary of the Grenada invasion was also a watershed for the United States by putting the Vietnam experience behind it as well as restoring the International respect it had lost over time.

President Reagan, as an actor, had a deep appreciation for the backdrop that caused him to decide to militarily intervene. There were active insurgencies in Nicaragua and El Salvador. Cuba was fomenting other undermining actions in large parts of South and Central America. The Middle East was very unsettled and US influence was on a steady decline. Grenada had become a Cuban communist lackey and was investing heavily in Point Salines airfield and had shipped a large engineer element as well as security forces. In March of 1983, President Reagan had warned of this initiative and noted that Grenada could become a very convenient mid-point between Cuba and its Latin American activities and could foment unrest throughout the region.

Earlier, in 1979, the democratic government of Grenada was overthrown in a coup and replaced by a socialist dictatorship. On 14 October 1983, an internal power struggle resulted in the death of the original coup leader, Maurice Bishop and his replacement by his chief lieutenant Bernard Coard and his enforcer Gen Hudson Austin, both professed communists. Sir Paul Scoon, the UK Governor General, was placed under house arrest. With this change of leadership, the eight islands quickly became a gangland populated by military age males with new AK 47's and non-existent discipline. Thuggery ruled more than ideology.

Despite this evolution, a US-based expatriate medical school, St Georges University, continued to operate from several campus's on the main island of Grenada. However, by the October coup, students and faculty became increasingly alarmed about the thuggish nature of local security elements. On 20 October, Hudson Austin announced a curfew for the students and the entire population, brought in additional guards and accused the school of spy activities. Numerous students called their friends and families and indicated their lives were in danger.

At this point, the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States as well as the governments of Barbados and Jamaica asked the US to intervene. Three days later, 23 October, the Marine barracks in Beirut were bombed with a large loss of life. The Joint Chiefs of Staff began intensive planning resulting in an execute order for the invasion of Grenada on 25 October 1983. This would be the first significant military action for the US since its departure from Vietnam in 1973.

During initial joint planning, independent of Grenada discussions, a decision was made to send a Marine force by sea to reinforce the Beirut elements. This force was afloat in the Caribbean when the decision to invade Grenada was made. Concurrently, the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) was ordered to be the Grenada strike force. JSOC had been created as a result of the failure of the Iran Rescue attempt and was an independent entity reporting to the JCS. It had not been significantly engaged to this point.

The JSOC plan was quite simple. SEALs would infiltrate early with a USAF Spec Ops team to land at Point Saline airfield-the key initial objective. They would covertly mark the runway as the drop zone for the 1st and 2d Ranger Battalions which would conduct an airborne assault to secure the airfield. Concurrently, Delta



and SEAL forces would depart Barbados with TF 160 aircraft to seize Richmond Hill prison, secure Sir Paul Scoon at his residence and relieve the students at St Georges University. At this point, the plan became a casualty of events with JSOC elements already deployed.

The JCS met on 23 Oct and had a very heated exchange regarding the invasion. PX Kelly, Marine Commandant, made an impassioned speech to the other Chiefs to engage the Marines in the invasion-those now headed to Beirut. General Vessey, the Chairman, noted the short time to execution but was willing to consider alternatives to the JSOC package. Later in the day, Army and Joint planners presented the plan in the Tank which would become the invasion force.

Marines would conduct simultaneous landings at Pearles Airfield on the north east side of the main island and secure beaches just north of Grand Anse, the main town and relieve SEAL's at Sir Paul Scoon's house. XVIII Airborne Corps at Ft Bragg would reinforce the Rangers at the airfield; assist in securing the medical school campus and conduct clearing and support operations in the interior. The US Navy, led by VAdm Joe Metcalf, would be overall in charge with a large two carrier task force. Army MG Norman Schwarzkopf was hastily appointed as Deputy Commander and was afloat with VAdm Metcalf. The initial H Hour was designated to be 0400 25 October. At this point, things began to slip off the rails with dramatic consequences.

JSOC had very little real time to conduct mission coordination or discuss task responsibilities with the conventional forces. There was no common Communication Electronic Operating Instructions (CEOI) between JSOC elements and the other players-this would prove disastrous as actions unfolded. Neither were there coordinated CEOI's between the forces afloat and XVIII Abn Corps.

The JSOC plan took advantage of its night vision capabilities and was based on a night entry. The Rangers would jump at 0400 on a night airfield seizure-a scenario they had rehearsed dozens of times before. TF 160, moving Delta and the SEAL's from Barbados would also take advantage of darkness to land the operators on their objectives with minimal visible light.

On 24 October, the Navy/Marines requested that the operation be postponed until approximately 0800-broad daylight. The reason was that charts of the Pearles area were very dated and they needed daylight to successfully navigate the shoals. Despite JSOC objections, the postponement was granted forcing the Rangers to conduct a jump of a heavily defended airfield in broad daylight.

In the early morning hours of 25 Oct, elements of SEAL Team 6 were dropped over the horizon by USAF SOF aircraft. They were heavily loaded and in an unexpectedly heavy sea, were drowned. The Marines successfully landed north of Grand Anse but were held up by a combination of very narrow roads and light opposition. Pearles was successfully occupied by the Marines as was the northern island of Carriacou. Elsewhere, results were mixed.

The Ranger daylight assault was met by 20mm anti-aircraft fire from several locations near the airfield. Eight of the jump C130's were holed by the guns. The results would have been worse but LTC Wes Taylor, the Ranger assault force commander asked for a 500 foot above ground jump and the AAA could not effectively depress to that altitude. The Cuban engineer security elements were fully engaged against the Rangers and held the high ground east of the runway. Ranger and Delta snipers immediately began to eliminate exposed Cubans. The accompanying AC 130 gunships effectively suppressed the AAA and reduced the ability of the Cubans to maneuver.

The night SEAL insertion to rescue Sir Paul Scoon was initially successful but Grenadian forces reacted promptly and surrounded the house. The Marines were unable to affect linkup and the SEAL's used the now



famous act of calling JSOC at Ft Bragg through the AT&T landline and directed the AC 130 gunships which kept the attackers at bay.

The Delta assault on Richmond Hill prison in broad daylight was a disaster. .51 cal machine guns on the corners of the prison walls effectively engaged the TF 160 helos and seriously wounded several Delta operators. The helos returned to Pt Saline to offload the wounded. The prison was not secured until several days after.

The 82d began its arrival in mid-morning of 25 October. The airfield, though now secured by Rangers and Delta had almost no ramp space. This meant that the airfield could accommodate only one aircraft at a time and it had to use one end of the runway as an offload point effectively shutting down other air landings. This issue continued throughout the duration of the invasion and was exacerbated by the artillery unit stationed at the southeastern side of the runway. Planes would have to divert whenever artillery missions were being fired. This combination resulted in a situation where the best turnaround times for landing took in excess of 45 minutes per plane. Over the next two days, 82d troops and Corps support elements trickled in one plane at a time. The inability of the USAF to rapidly land aircraft forced them to scatter planes throughout the region to refuel and await a landing time. Consequently, most units landed piecemeal, intermixed and well-behind schedule.

Larger issues were being experienced due to the lack of adequate prior planning and coordination. The inability of the TF 160 pilots to talk to the Navy ships became a serious issue with casualties. TF 160 wanted to fly the JSOC casualties directly to naval ships offshore as the best, most expedient way. However, when they approached the forces afloat, there was no ship to helo commo and the Navy waved them off. Finally, in frustration, a TF 160 pilot with WIA's, ignored the wave off and landed on the helo deck despite great efforts from the Navy deck crew to prevent that. After some heated discussions, frequencies were exchanged and from then on better order and common sense prevailed.

By 27 October, thanks to minimal opposition and a lot of ground liaison, some calm and order prevailed. The 82d discovered a second unknown campus at Blue Anse and secured the students. It also moved overland and secured the main campus at St Georges's. The Rangers and Delta were removed and returned to their home bases. Elements of the 82d were sent throughout the eight islands to begin the separation of the military thugs and criminals from the population. The 2-505 of the 82d captured Gen Hudson Austin on the 27th effectively ending any possibility of organized resistance.

An incident occurred on the 27th that was hugely significant for the psychology and morale of the soldiers. The 2-505 had landed piecemeal throughout 26-27 October. About 0800 on the morning of the 27th, finally assembled, it was moving in column across the runway toward the interior. Simultaneously from the east, all the recovered students were moving toward a C141 which would take them back to the US. The two columns paralleled each other on the very hot and humid runway. In a completely spontaneous move, the students, as if one, broke the column and moved toward the soldiers. The students overwhelmed the completely surprised troopers with kisses, hand shakes, backslapping and effusive thanks. It made no matter that these specific soldiers did not rescue the students. The students wanted to show their appreciation and gratefulness for their rescue to the sweat soaked uniforms with the US Flag on the shoulder. This event had a hugely positive morale effect on the soldiers and was a wonderful psychological boost after the very confusing and piecemeal introduction.

Such was the welcome all soldiers found as they occupied the interior. Grenada is extremely rugged, mountainous, thickly jungle covered and with only the most basic of a road network. Virtually all the island is ringed by a sheer rocky coastline with virtually no beach areas. Battalions were separated into isolated platoon and squad sizes to occupy and clear the many small villages and individual homes sights in this rugged terrain. The main island and its seven smaller islands were quickly occupied by a brigade-sized series of essentially Ranger patrols.



The purpose of these population sweeps was to root out the military and criminal elements. By the end of the first day of the invasion, Austin's army had dropped its uniforms, put on civilian clothes and tried to fade back in the population. It didn't work. Virtually every small unit had the same story. They would arrive in a populated area via helo or truck (units acquired portions of a large Soviet vehicle park). They would be effusively greeted by the populace as saviors, offered food, water and shelter.

Very quickly, locals would point out the thugs who would be detained and flown to the rear for further interrogation and incarceration. This scenario continued throughout the period until all population centers had been screened and occupied by forces ranging from a squad to a battalion CP. The soldiers settled down and enjoyed a receptive population and its gratefulness.

By mid-November, most of the assault elements had returned to CONUS and military missions became restarting the infrastructure, getting local government running and assisting the Caribbean Peacekeeping Forces in assuming control while local Grenadians underwent short term security and police training. It was during this period that the underlying emotional support by the Grenadians for the invasion became evident.

In the wake of the invasion, a number of countries, Britain included, objected strenuously to the direct intervention by US forces. Speeches were made in the UN protesting America and demonstrations against the US were held in several foreign cities. There was no issue with the intervention on the part of the Grenadians.

The US Thanksgiving holiday was fast approaching and soldiers talked to the locals about it and its meaning. The Grenadians, spread in a hundred different small population centers independently began to investigate and query about this thing called Thanksgiving. Unbeknownst to the US soldiers, Grenadians talked about it to themselves and developed plans to demonstrate their appreciation. As an historic British colony, the concept of Thanksgiving and its traditional meal components was unknown-even less in existence on the island nation. However, boats and light aircraft departed, phone calls were made and by bits and pieces these strange food stuffs were assembled in secret. Finally, on the US Thanksgiving Day, the many towns and villages with their squad or platoon of US soldiers invited them to have a Grenadian Thanksgiving. No one was more surprised than the soldiers and their leadership.

All across the islands, the same scene repeated itself. The soldiers with full combat gear would assemble at the villagers request in a building or shady field. Food would be laid out and a Grenadian would make a small talk and invite the soldiers to eat. The meal would be some form of turkey-canned or roasted whole accompanied by canned yams, cranberry or potatoes-nothing native and all unfamiliar to the island kitchens. The speech was invariably the same-

"We don't know much about this thing you call Thanksgiving and we don't understand the food. But we do know that it is important to you and want you to know that our Thanksgiving is the day you came. Thank you."

Today, in Grenada, Thanksgiving is a designated National holiday. It is 25 October.

The success of the invasion, reinforced by low casualties and the media-inescapable appreciation of the Grenadians, provided a rare "good news" moment for the military. The many glitches and issues that arose as part of the invasion backdrop were addressed and resolved albeit not without controversy.

Key was the elevation of Special Operating Forces (SOF) to a level of equality with other major commands. Relentless questioning by the House and Senate on why mistakes occurred (intelligence failures, no Joint CEOI, no clear lines of authority etc) resulted in the Nunn-Cohen Amendment establishing US Special Operations Command at the four star level and slightly later the creation of a SOF-controlled budget line MFP-11, giving SOF elements authority to procure outside their mother services. This was accomplished in spite of



repeated protestations by the Services that such legislation was not necessary, facts notwithstanding. A case can be clearly made that the success of the Bin Laden raid was largely created in the residue of shortcomings revealed by the Grenada invasion.

Of equal human importance, was the effect of the invasion on the individual military participants- predominately elements of the 82d Airborne Division and the XVIII Airborne Corps. On the islands, they lived in an atmosphere of sincere appreciation for their presence and were constantly showered with food and thanks. For many, it was an important introduction into the symbology of the flag on their shoulder and what it meant to others as well as to themselves as was the case in June of 1944. They returned home to massive rallies and demonstrations of appreciation and for the first time since the end of WW II, knew they were appreciated. It was a far cry from Vietnam and put that experience behind. Everyone wearing a uniform knew they had done well and had made a real positive difference.

My unit, the 2-505, was the last combat unit to leave. We were spread across all the islands and were focused on re-building infrastructure, training local security forces and assisting in what today would be called COIN operations. Three events in this period had a lasting impression regarding how America and its Military now felt about themselves.

As the senior field officer reporting directly to XVIII Airborne Corps, I made daily rounds of all the villages to resolve issues, check on the troops and evaluate the turnover from the 82d Airborne to the Caribbean Peacekeeping Forces. As our time to depart grew near, I was continuously met with small groups of villagers pressing petitions on me for Grenada to be the 51st state. These entreaties steadily grew as our time on the island grew shorter. I was very mindful of a paraphrase of Churchill when I talked to my small units in these villages- Never have so many been gratified by so few.

One of my soldiers was killed by an accidental weapons discharge. He was an ethnic Indian who immigrated to America with his parents- one a doctor and the other a nurse. He was their only child. I wrote a letter of condolence to them which was answered very quickly. The parents simply said it was a privilege to have him as their son and a greater privilege to pay back the Nation that gave them so much. While they had a tragic loss it was for a great cause and they would always remember that their son was part of something larger than himself.

On our last day on the island, assembled near the airfield, I walked around all the units and talked to the troops and their place in history and pride in doing their duty. I came across one soldier who was reading a letter in one hand. In the other hand, he held a newspaper clipping of the Statue of Liberty. I asked him what it was all about. He was an E4 from New York by way of Puerto Rico. He told me his mother had sent him the clipping. She was a single mother who immigrated to New York with two babies and began a life of hard work to support them. In her letter, she thanked her son for what he had done for everyone, reminded him that we all owe a debt to "the lady in the harbor" and that she was so proud he had paid that debt.

Grenada created the foundation for the pride we all now have for our military. While we can argue about their employment, we do not argue about them. Grenada allowed us to collectively put Vietnam in the attic of our minds. Today, Grenada is reasonably prosperous, peaceful and progressive. Any American, especially an Airborne soldier, will be warmly greeted and treated to whatever is available. Especially on the 25th of October.



## FINAL JUMPS

Hi:

My name is Rick Dibeau, I am the son of Max A. Dibeau who was in the 505th RCT. When he made his 1st combat jump it was on June 6th, 1944 with the 2nd Bn Pathfinders. He was also involved in Operation Market Garden and the Battle of the Bulge where he had his right eye shot out in January 1945. He never talked much about his past until recently but his memory was not what is used to be. We were stunned and proud when we learned that his picture is on the cover of All American, All the Way. He is front and center of the picture. From that I found the book, 4 Stars of Valor, the history of the 505th PIR and a few of the stories that he did relate were in that book told by other members of his Company. He had mentioned time and again that he wanted to make to the oldest member list and I didn't know what he was referring to until going through his stuff and finding copies of The Panther and seeing a list in an old edition. Well I don't think he made it because on June 25th, 2012 he passed away. I saw that there was a final jump section in some of the papers and thought you might want to or could put that in a future edition for any of his friends that are still around and may read it. It would be great if there was anyone still around and maybe they could send us a story of 2 about him. They could e-mail to [owossosoftball@charter.net](mailto:owossosoftball@charter.net) or mail to 1000 W South St. Owosso, MI 48867. Thanks for your time.  
**Rick.**

## 2013 Reunion

The 2013 Reunion will take place October 9 – 13, 2013 in Fayetteville, NC. Activities are tentatively scheduled as follows:

**October 9** – Registration day, CP will be open

**October 10** – Welcoming breakfast at 8:00 AM with activities the rest of the day at Ft. Bragg.

**October 11** – Trip to the General Lee Museum in Dunn, NC and the Airborne and Special Operations Museum in downtown Fayetteville, NC

**October 12** – Banquet

## Searching For

Dear Ellen, hope you are doing fine

I have a question. I need assistance/help: I am looking for contacts (both veterans and/or next of kin) of soldiers from the 46th, 48th and 3044th Quartermaster Graves Registration Companies, who were involved in burying the dead in Sicily in the period July 1943 - April 1947.

I am writing a book about the temporary American GELA Cemetery in Sicily, where over 1,200 men and women were buried in the period mentioned before. All three units were involved in burying the dead or maintenance/beautification of the GELA Cemetery.

What I am looking for are documents/morning reports/cemetery journals and a roster of the units.

Perhaps those persons on your mailing list can ask around in their family or friends or veteran associations. Any help/clue/hints are more than welcome.

Thank you,

**Jan Bos**

**Nijmegen, Holland**

**[circle82@gmail.com](mailto:circle82@gmail.com)**

## Mail Box

### TO ALL 505 Veterans, FRIENDS AND FAMILIES

My name is Dion Murphy, the son of Pathfinder, Bob Murphy, A/505. I am in search of any surviving D-Day +4, June 6- 10, 1944 veterans or their families that know the name of any soldier(s) killed in action (KIA) or died of wounds (DOW) as the result of the Normandy battles at La Fiere causeway, Aid station at La Fiere,



Cauquigny hamlet church area, Hamlet des Heutes, Timmes orchard, La Pierre Farm, Le Motey, Gray Castle, Chef du Pont bridge and Hill 30 areas. These areas are approx. 3+ km/mi. west of St Mere Eglise around Drop Zones "N", "T" and "O". In these same areas nearby and around Chef du Pont, the glider Landing Zones of "E" and "W" are located as well. If ANYONE (this includes veterans, friends of veterans, families of veterans to include the wives, sons/daughters, grandsons/granddaughters, brothers/sisters, any former girlfriend waiting to hear from their pre WWII partner) can give me ANY soldiers names KIA/DOW from any of the following : 82nd Airborne Regimental Combat Teams 505, 507, 508 and the 401/325/320/319/ Glider Infantry Regiments, 307 Med and Engineer Btn., 90th Infantry Div. 345 Field Artillery Btn, 746 Tank Btn., including any teams that may be missing from this list. This is for a personal project in dedication to my father and his fallen comrades who battled for the bridges. They shall have a name to a face, someday we may be able to know about the life they lived before the war, sacrificed in the name of freedom. Please send All responses to:

**Dion Murphy**

**surferdion@hotmail.com**

**3332 NORMANDY DR.; Port Charlotte, FL 33952**

**(Tel.) 239-200-2420**

Niels Henkemans

<nielshenkemans@hotmail.com>

View Contact

To: Ellen Peters <eeptx@sbcglobal.net>

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Hi Ellen,

You may find it interesting to hear I have interviewed a Lt. of the 746th Tank Battalion who attacked Neuville-au-Plain on D+1 and I am trying to contact another veteran who was the gunner in the battalions adjutant's tank. This means he was in one of the tanks that attacked the German armor north of SME on D+1 (he brought up the rear of the advance party of 5(?) tanks).

Apart from this I have been looking at the account of Sgt. Cullen E. Clark Jr. (I got it from his sister's grandson). He was in 3rd platoon E/505 (under Lt. Peddicord). Their plane made various maneuvers to escape a German searchlight and the men (+ that of another plane) landed somewhere in the 101AB sector. They set up a roadblock until some tanks reached them. A recon. Attempt with these failed and Sgt. Clark was seriously wounded. This recon attempt is also described in Phil's 'Four Stars of Valor' BTW.

I'm hoping to identify where this happened. It is possible this happened at Les Forges, but there are too few details to be sure about that yet. The other names mentioned in the account are:

Lt. Peddicord (killed on D+1, apparently before reaching SME)

McCarthy

Hebine

Ames (Medic)

Flynn

I believe most of these men should have been in E/505 and third platoon. Perhaps there is information about some of these so we can understand Sgt. Clark's story a bit better?

**Niels**

Dear Madam, Dear Sir,

Having found your email-address on the internet, please forgive me for this impersonal email, but I believe that my story might be of interest to you.



I am from Belgium (Flemish), living in Normandy, France. For several years I have been interested in the history of the Second World War, and I am also a private collector of military radio communications equipment used in the Second World War.

In 2014, we will be commemorating the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the DDAY-landings. I have started a project to create a new museum, here in Normandy, totally dedicated to military radio- & communications- equipment. There is no one other museum here in Normandy which talks about radio and its uses during the Second World War, hence my idea to get my museum up and running by 2014.

This museum will have the following themes:

- Educational (sound, waves, frequencies, morse, electronics, AM, VHF,...);
- WW1 (if I can find enough equipment);
- WW2 – operational usage of signals equipment in the field & vehicles;
- WW2 – Pathfinders;
- WW2 – field repair of signals;
- Clandestine communications – spy-kits;
- ... and much more

Those themes will be animated with uniforms, lots of radio-equipment, pictures and other artefacts. There might also be the possibility to have a section dedicated on civil radios and modern military radio communications.

Since this museum will be created in Normandy, and since I have a number of military American radios, I would like to dedicate a part of this museum to the Pathfinders and to those men who were part of this.

This letter is an appeal to ANYONE, who might know of any veterans still alive who landed in Normandy on DDAY, and who were involved in the Pathfinders.

I have less than two years to prepare this museum, so anyone who might know of hidden pictures, videos, sound-tapes, radio-equipment, and/or any other item which could be exposed in such a museum, I would appreciate if you could let me know and/or forward this letter to anyone who might know something.

Thank you for reading to the end of this email, and please do not hesitate to contact me for any further details.

**Luc Verschooris**  
**Luc.verschooris@free.fr**

----- Forwarded Message -----

**From:** Colin McNulty <[cmcnul1@gmail.com](mailto:cmcnul1@gmail.com)>

**To:** [info@ww2-airborne.us](mailto:info@ww2-airborne.us)

**Sent:** Tuesday, May 1, 2012 8:56 AM

**Subject:** BBC Radio / GI Britain

To Whom It May Concern:

I hope all is well. I am a producer for BBC Radio. We are putting together a major oral history series to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the arrival of American servicemen in Britain. I am wondering if you might be able to help me.

We are looking to contact former GIs that might have some memorable stories about their time in Britain between 1942 and 1944. Though major military events (including the Italian Campaign, D-Day and the



Battle of the Bulge) will be included in the programmes, we will be focusing on the GI experience in Britain (how they were received by the British, tensions with British soldiers and between American troops, relationships with British women, etc.). In the end, we want to create a series that will include some extraordinary memories. We're hoping the series will provide for our listeners an appreciation for the arrival of millions of brave American servicemen and the impact it had on British life.

Would you perhaps be able to put me into contact with some GIs or their family members that have some stories about their time in Britain? If you were able to provide me with their phone numbers, then I can certainly call them at a convenient time. Are there any veterans or resources for the 17th airbourne division that you could point me to?

Any assistance that you could provide would be greatly appreciated.

All the best,

**Colin McNulty**

**Producer**

**BBC Radio 4 / Whistledown Productions**

### **505<sup>th</sup> RCT HATS FOR SALE**



**Barbara Fortenbaugh found 505<sup>th</sup> RCT hats amongst her father's possessions. She has graciously donated the hats to our association. These hats are in limited supply. Cost is \$15.00 + postage. Anyone interested in purchasing one of these hats should contact Ellen Peters at (214) 632-1360 or [eeptx@sbcglobal.net](mailto:eeptx@sbcglobal.net).**



## **2012-2013 Family and Friends of the 505<sup>th</sup> RCT Assn. Officers**

**Barbara Fortenbaugh, President:** 973 Gladys St. SW; Stanton, MI 48888-9122;  
Home: (989) 831-4235; Cell: (912) 665-9413; [willowbsf@aol.com](mailto:willowbsf@aol.com)

**Otis Sampson, Jr., Vice-President:** 95 Indian Point Rd.; Tiverton R.I. 02878;  
Home: (401) 624-6910; Cell: (401) 225-8558; [sampsono@srminc.net](mailto:sampsono@srminc.net)

**Ellen Peters, Secretary-Treasurer:** 3630 Townsend Dr.; Dallas, TX 75229; Home:  
(214) 352-7002; Cell: (214) 632-1360; Fax: (214) 350-0951;  
[eeptx@sbcglobal.net](mailto:eeptx@sbcglobal.net)

**Gene Garren, 4-Year Trustee:** 656 Winter Star Rd.; Burnsville, NC 28714; Home:  
(828) 682-6650; Cell: (828) 284-0951; [genegarren@aol.com](mailto:genegarren@aol.com)

**Barbara Gavin Fauntleroy, 3 -Year Trustee:** 19 Prospect Ridge - Unit 29;  
Ridgefield, CT 06877-5129; Home: (203) 438-2461; [gavin505@att.net](mailto:gavin505@att.net)

**Jim Blankenship, 2-Year Trustee:** 2135 Saint Thomas Way; Suwanee, GA 30024;  
Home: (678) 349-2262; Cell: (404) 906-5646; Fax (770) 822-4751;  
[jimpix@charter.net](mailto:jimpix@charter.net); [airbornealltheway.blankenship@gmail.com](mailto:airbornealltheway.blankenship@gmail.com)

**Duke Boswell, 1-Year Trustee:** 930 Crown Ridge Dr.; Colorado Springs, CO 80904-  
1734; Home: (719) 633-3569; [bos930@aol.com](mailto:bos930@aol.com)

**Ray Fary, Veterans' Liaison Trustee:** 8254 Madison Ave.; Munster, IN 46321-  
1627; Home: (219) 836-7974; [RFARY@mailstation.com](mailto:RFARY@mailstation.com);  
[r.fary8280@sbcglobal.net](mailto:r.fary8280@sbcglobal.net)

### **Copies of "Ready" Available**

Several copies of the original "Ready" were found in the Static Line wear house and are available for purchase. Price is \$250.00 + \$25.35 postage for a total of \$274.35. Contact Jim Blankenship at 2135 Saint Thomas Way; Suwanee, GA 30024-3285; Home: (678) 349-2262 Cell: (404) 906-5646 email: [jimpix@charter.net](mailto:jimpix@charter.net) or [ff505rct@charter.net](mailto:ff505rct@charter.net) or Ellen Peters at 3630 Townsend Dr.; Dallas, TX 75229-3805; Home: (214) 352-7002 or Cell: (214) 632-1360; email: [eeptx@sbcglobal.net](mailto:eeptx@sbcglobal.net).

### **Call for Dues!**

Dues for the new fiscal year of Family and Friends of the 505th PIR Assn. were due on July 1. WWII 505 RCT veterans, widows of WWII 505 RCT veterans, and Honorary Members are not required to pay dues. All others are. Your dues are critical to our FF505RCT operations and reunions.



Dues are \$12.00 per year. Multiple years may be paid if desired and donations are gratefully accepted. Please send dues to:

**F&F505RCT Assn.**  
**3630 Townsend Dr.**  
**Dallas, TX 75229-3805**

### **Changes of Address**

Please forward change of email addresses to [ff505rct@charter.net](mailto:ff505rct@charter.net) or [eeptx@sbcglobal.net](mailto:eeptx@sbcglobal.net) and postal changes of address to: Ellen Peters; 3630 Townsend Dr.; Dallas, TX 75229-3805

### **Panther Submissions**

#### **Panther Submissions:**

If you have something you would like to put in the Panther, kindly send it to Ellen Peters; 3630 Townsend Dr.; Dallas, TX 75229-3805 or [eeptx@sbcglobal.net](mailto:eeptx@sbcglobal.net). Send all changes of physical and/or email addresses to the same address/email.

### **Dedication**

This and all Panther newsletters are dedicated in loving memory to our original Panther editor, Don McKeage. We love and miss you.

## *MY HEROES*

