

Fifteenth Infantry Regiment



www.sergeantsmajor.org/cando

15th Infantry Regiment Association Newsletter

July 2005

With an eye for safety — and a nod to respect

By Charlie Coon, Stars and Stripes

Midwest edition, Thursday, March 31, 2005

EAST TIKRIT, Iraq — They've been in Iraq for less than two months. But there's hardly a soldier with 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment who hasn't been attacked or known someone who has. Usually it comes from hit-and-run tactics such as roadside bombs or mortars launched at U.S. bases from afar.

The troops raid homes in the middle of the night searching for those attackers, weapons and information. But sometimes, the invasions end up being just an invasion of privacy.

"We do it in a respectful way," said Capt. Morgan Southern, commander of the 1-15th's Company D. "But it's not respectful to get people up in the middle of the night and put them out of their house. We can't help to think that they might be resentful."

Unless the evidence is firm, troops try not to treat the residents as criminals. Southern said his soldiers explain why they are there, search without upsetting too much, and thank the residents for their cooperation.

"We approach this as, 'How would you feel if someone had done this to you?' You try to treat them as good as the circumstances allow," he said.

Good intelligence is hard to come by. Some Iraqis don't want to cooperate. Others are afraid to get involved. Information can be sketchy, and analyzing it can be an imperfect art rather than solid science.

"A lot of times you have to [obtain results] from doing random searches, instead of something that is intel-driven," 2nd Lt. Jeff Goulet said. "The intel is one of your biggest struggles."

It is now standard to bring Iraqi soldiers on the raids. Some wear ski masks to protect their identities. But they speak Arabic and can converse with the Iraqi people, Southern said.

Sunday's operation wasn't a total bust. According to the battalion commander, Lt. Col. Gary Brito, another platoon searching in the vicinity found a man who led soldiers to a site where three mortars were stashed.

"It's still your job," Goulet said. "Obviously you're hoping to find what you're looking for. You just have to regroup, do it again and get it next time."

Article and photos at right by Charlie Coon. Used with permission from the Stars and Stripes a DoD publication. © 2005 Stars and Stripes

Ready, aim, fire



CHARLIE COON/Stars and Stripes

From left, Spc. Johnathan Cotton of Peachtree City, Ga., the assistant gunner; Cpl. Nicholas Dolby of Huntington, Ind., the squad leader; and gunner Pfc. Warren Cash of Staunton, Va. — all with Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment — fire a 120 mm mortar during practice Tuesday near Forward Operating Base Mackenzie in Ad-Dahiyah, Iraq. The soldiers were working with forward observers checking their results and fire-direction soldiers nearby to sharpen their aim and improve their speed and ability to adjust to targets.

DUES NOTICE-TO ANNUAL MEMBERS

If your address label shows 2005 your dues are paid to October 2005. You can help significantly reduce Association expenses by remitting your annual dues now and eliminating the need to mail out dues notices just a short time later. Please help us reduce the costs for printing and mailing dues notices for annual members. This edition will be the last publication prior to October. Please send your dues payment right away to the Treasurer: address and dues amounts shown on Page 2.

*The Dragon***Officers**

The Dragon is the quarterly publication of the 15th Infantry Regiment Association. It is published in January, April, July and October. Neither its editorial nor articles content carry official endorsement of the Association. Input for the Dragon is due the 15th of each month prior to publishing.

Edward Dojutrek.....President
Michael J. Horn.....Editor
Lloyd D. WhitmerTreasurer

Objectives of the Association

- To perpetuate and foster the history and traditions of the Regiment.
- To provide opportunities for uniting past and present members of the Regiment into a close and cooperative alliance.
- To promote morale and high esprit de corps among members of the Regiment.
- To acquire and maintain a repository of regimental historical memorabilia.
- To assist in the maintenance of monuments dedicated to the units of the 15th Infantry Regiment.

Send dues and new addresses to:

Lloyd D. Whitmer
7500 Mose Road
Navarre, Ohio 44662
330-756-2803

Annual dues \$10 for regular members and \$5 for active duty members, due October 1 each year.

Life membership: To age 60 = \$150; Age 61-69 = \$120; Age 70-79 = \$100; Age 80 and above = \$50.

Send or Email news items to:

Michael J. Horn
Editor of The Dragon
1833 Walker Ridge Drive
Marietta, GA 30064 - 4193
☎ 678-581-0392
Mhorn1833@comcast.net



President Edward Dojutrek
3303 Far View Dr
Austin, TX 78730-3300
512-343-0900
edoju87742@aol.com

Vice President..... James Drury
716 9th Street
Camanche, IA 50091
563-259-8952
jim-d@mchsi.com

Secretary and Publicity
.....**Richard McKiddy**
9520 N Twinkling Shadows Way
Tucson, AZ 85743-5495
520-744-6197
rnminkcmo@aol.com

Treasurer.....Lloyd D. Whitmer
7500 Mose Road
Navarre, Ohio 44662
330-756-2803
whitmerld@sssnet.com

Membership.....John Burke
5704 Hastings Square
Columbus, GA 31909
706-563-8909
johnt2u@mchsi.com

Assistant Treasurer
Richard R. Guimond
7001 142ND AVE. N. L-324
Largo, FL 33771
727-530-5342
rquimond@tampabay.rr.com

Commander, 1st Battalion
LTC Gary M. Brito
HQ 1-15 IN, Bldg. 9161
Ft. Benning, GA 31905-1641
706-544-1633

Asst. Secretary-Treasurer 1st Bn
CPT Lee Gerber, S2
HQ 1-15 IN, Bldg 9161
Fort Benning, GA 31905-1641
706-544-2920

Commander, 3rd Battalion
LTC Gary Luck, Jr.
HQ 3-15 IN, Bldg. 522
692 William H. Wilson Ave., Ste 101
Ft. Stewart, GA 31313
912-767-7720

Asst. Secretary-Treasurer 3rd Bn
CPT Eric Melloh, S1
HQ 3-15 IN, Bldg. 522
692 William H. Wilson Ave., Ste 104
Ft. Stewart, GA 31313
eric.melloh@us.army.mil
912-767-9923

Chaplain.....Charles C. Trout
10191 Birchwood Dr.
Huntington Beach, CA 92646-5432
714-836-4981
Chaptrout@aol.com

HCOR.....Jerry Bates
1903 Mallison Way
Alexandria, VA 22308-2760
703-360-5417

HSGMOR.....Tom Twomey
1923 Wendover Dr.
Fayetteville, NC 28304
910-484-8886
tom2me@att.net

Historian.....LTC Timothy Stoy
950th TC, Unit 22419 GAFSC
APO AE 09069

Trustees

Henry Burke
1122 Palisades Cir
Columbia, SC 29223-3409
803-782-7517
pennieburke@sc.rr.com

Roger Lochman
1616 Frederick
Collinsville, IL 62234-1067
618-345-1067

Whit Mullen
1106 McPherson RD
Burlington, NC 27215-4420
336-584-5516
whitmull@bellsouth.net

Opal Kays, Jr.
1045 S. 10th Street
Vincennes, IN 42591
812-882-0674
jr_kays@yahoo.com



SPC Steven Ray Givens

SPC Givens was assigned to A Company, 1st Battalion in Iraq as Bradley driver. He was born March 16, 1979 and KIA from hostile fire on 8 May 2005. He entered our Army in March 1988. From January 2000 to February 2001 he served at Camp Casey, Korea with D Company, 2-9 Infantry. He served with HHC, 1st Battalion in the prior deployment to Iraq. A Memorial Service was held May 13th in Iraq. SPC Givens is survived by his wife, Cayssia; his son Blake, his mother Joyce McDuffie, and father Steven Ray Wright.

1LT Michael J. Fasnacht

1LT Michael J. Fasnacht was born 8 February 1980 in Janesville, MN. He was killed by an IED on 8 June 2005 near Tikrit. He was commissioned to active service 26 December 2002. After the Infantry Officers Basic Course (IOBC) he was assigned to HHC, 1st Battalion as the Assistant S-1. Later he was assigned as a platoon leader in Baker Company. At the time of his death he had served 11 months in the 1st Battalion. His awards include the Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Army Achievement Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Iraqi Service Medal, CIB, Ranger Tab, Airborne Badge and Air Assault Badge. 1LT Fasnacht is survived by his wife Tresa of Mankato, MN and parents Mr. & Mrs Raymond Fasnacht of Jaynesville, MN.

Chaplains Corner

By LTC Chuck Trout, Sr.

Difficult to realize that 2005 is over half gone and it's time to celebrate another Independence Day. With this in mind, let us take a time out to pray together. Heavenly Father, we invoke Your presence and ask Your blessing as we pause to remember the many blessings You have given us since this great nation declared it's independence 229 years ago. We ask for inspiration for our lives and for good and improved relationships with others in our community and in our nation. Give us faith in God and love for our fellowmen that we may have something to deposit on which the young men and women of today can draw interest tomorrow. As we face these exciting days as a nation, grant us the vision to see Your will and the courage to attempt it. May the faith and service and love that strengthened our forefathers so inspire us that we may serve the needs of our day without counting the cost, even as they did not count the cost in theirs. We ask that you watch over us and all the members of our armed forces this day and always. And finally, please continue to Bless America. Amen

1st Battalion News

by LTC Gary Brito

History in the making as the 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment (DRAGONS) work with an attached company of soldiers from the Republic of Georgia. (former Soviet Union). The company was attached to 1-15 last month in Iraq. They will be part of the CAN-DO battalion until November. On 14 June 2005, the battalion celebrated the Army's birthday with a special dinner for all of the Soldiers. At the dinner, the commander of the Georgian company, Captain Tsakadze presented LTC Brito with a gift in honor of the Army's Birthday. The gifts were a bottle of Georgian Red wine and a drinking horn made from an animal tusk, which is ceremonially is used to drink the wine. Each gift will be proudly displayed in the Regimental China Room located at Fort Benning.



Books Worth A Look

Cold Ground's Been My Bed – A Korean War Memoir by Daniel Wolfe. A Company L veteran, Wolfe presents a no-holds barred story of a nice kid from the Bronx who grew up fast on the battlefields of Korea. The title, from a blues song sung by his first bunker buddy on the front line, speaks to the conditions experienced by soldiers when suddenly faced with the reality of war. Association Member and Bronze Star recipient Wolfe tells his story with boyish innocence gone awry, injecting gallows humor into the heartbreaking pathos of daily life in reserve and in combat. In recounting his story, he never pretends to be more than he was, a young man shocked and shaped by the brutality of war.



Mail Call

LTC Tim Stoy
950th TC Unit 22419 GAF
APO AE 09069



I recently returned from a visit to Alsace, where my wife and I had the great honor to be present at the inauguration of Place John Shirley in Bennwihr, France. We had the opportunity to walk in John's shoes for a few hours with him, and with some of the villagers who had been in the village during the war, although none of them were still present in the village at the time of the 15th's fighting.

The event and the battlefield tour have motivated me to contact you in my attempt to put together a detailed picture of the fighting on the Wine Road of Alsace in December 1944. I have been deeply interested in the Regiment's fighting there since my early days as a Lieutenant with the 2d Battalion, 15th Infantry in Wildflecken. I am especially interested in the attacks on Sigolsheim, Hill 351, and Bennwihr.

I would like to ask the Can Do veterans from WWII if you were involved in the combat for Sigolsheim, Hill 351, and Bennwihr, and if so, if you could please share with me your memories of the fighting there? Anything you could provide would be very useful to me and greatly appreciated.

I am looking forward to hearing from you and hope we will be able to work together on this great project.

Gilbert Conner
6229 Heberton Dr
Verona, PA 15147

I received my Dragon and to my surprise I found on page 7 of the April edition the name and address of my buddy whom I haven't seen or spoke to in 52 years. If it wasn't for the Dragon I would've gone to heaven not knowing his whereabouts. His name is John F. Perry of Company B in Korea. J.F. Perry found out I could type and WO Daley was looking for a supplyman to take the place of his supply sergeant who was rotating out after 9 months in the combat zone (36 points to go home). Well, the Army wanted everything reported, lost rifles, lost gear, lost mortars, and even lost clips. Today, J.F. Perry lives in Santa Maria, CA. He is going strong at 77 years. He gave me a call. It was great to hear from a buddy after 50+ years, know we're both still alive, and remember those days in Korea.

Jean B. Darling
97 Great Pines Drive
Mashpee, MA 02649
1-508-477-0326
JeDarli5@aol.com

I have been looking for any info about my brother, Edward Oldfield. He was killed in Korea April 16, 1953 while in A Company. I am his only sibling and our parents are now deceased. We never got any information except the telegram and I desperately need any help that can be given.

Promotions

Aron Hauquitz of the 1st Battalion to Captain.

Application For Membership

15th Infantry Regiment Association

Today's Date _____

Last Name _____

First Name _____

Middle Initial _____

Street Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____ - _____

Telephone (_____) _____

E-mail Address _____

Rank _____ Date of birth _____

Co. & Bn. served in: _____

Dates served in 15th IN: _____

Spouse's Name: _____

Type of membership desired:

- Regular Annual \$10.00; Regular Associate Annual \$10.00; On Active Duty Annual \$5.00;
- Life membership: To age 60= \$150; Age 61-69= \$120; Age 70-79=\$100; Age 80 and above =\$50.

Complete application. Mail with check or money order payable to the Treasurer, 15th Infantry Reg't Association.

Mail to:

Treasurer
Lloyd D. Whitmer
7500 Mose Road
Navarre, OH 44662

Lieutenant from Mankato killed in Iraq

by Mark Steil, Minnesota Public Radio June 10, 2005

The latest Minnesota soldier killed in Iraq is being praised for his love of family and country. 1st Lieutenant Michael Fasnacht was killed by a roadside bomb Wednesday near Tikrit.

Mankato, Minn. — The Army lieutenant from Mankato was in charge of 30 other soldiers as a platoon leader in Iraq, part of the 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division.

Fasnacht grew up in Janesville and went through the ROTC program at Minnesota State University Mankato. One of his teachers there was Lieutenant Colonel Pat O'Sullivan.

"Soon as we found out yesterday from classmates of his, we contacted army casualty assistance officials to try to confirm," says O'Sullivan. "And all they would tell me is what's been available to the open press is that he was riding as track commander of his Bradley Fighting Vehicle, leading a convoy near Tikrit. And they hit what we call an IED, Improvised Explosive Device, on the side of the road. Right side of the Bradley Fighting Vehicle hit the explosive device and Mike was killed."

O'Sullivan describes Fasnacht as a quiet, humble, dedicated man respected by his fellow soldiers. He graduated from Mankato in 2003 and was commissioned into the U.S. Army. He's been in Iraq since about January.

O'Sullivan says he's heard by email from some of Fasnacht's friends in Iraq. He says they plan to hold a memorial service there this weekend for the fallen soldier. O'Sullivan says Fasnacht was a standout cadet during his time in Mankato.

"Just a superb performer when he was in our ROTC program," says O'Sullivan. "So his loss is huge to me personally because I knew him very, very well. Kind of your ideal ROTC cadet. Just was destined for great things as an army officer."

Fasnacht's family issued a statement on the death of their son and husband. It read in part: "Michael will be remembered for his devotion to his loving wife, Tresa Ann, his selfless military work, kind faith and unwavering love of his family." The family then requested privacy.

The soldier's death in Iraq is at least the second time a Fasnacht from Janesville has died in combat. A cousin, Air Force Staff Sergeant David Fasnacht, was killed in Viet Nam in July 1967 when his base was shelled.

Among the Minnesota leaders sending condolences to the Fasnacht family was Governor Tim Pawlenty. Pawlenty spoke on his weekly radio show.

"Another example of somebody who came from a military family, military tradition, tradition of patriotism. And of course as with all of these fallen soldiers, we stop and we reflect, we give thanks, we want to express our gratitude, and certainly we want to say to the families of these fallen soldiers that we are grateful for them, that we wouldn't have the country we have without them. And here again, with Michael, we want to express that on behalf of Minnesota," said Pawlenty.

First Lieutenant Fasnacht is the 23rd Minnesotan to have died in the Mideast during the war in Iraq.

©2005 Minnesota Public Radio. All rights reserved. Used by permission of Minnesota Public Radio and MPR News (news.minnesota.publicradio.org).



Presidents Message

By Ed Dojutrek

With this, my last President's Message, I would like to bring the membership up to date on the progress and changes that have been made in our Association since the last issue of the Dragon. First, and most important, was our search for a new Dragon Editor. Our search disclosed that the most qualified applicant was David Adams, who has extensive writing and editing experience. His name was presented to the Board of Trustees and he was unanimously approved to the position. David will coordinate with our present Editor, Mike Horn, on the July issue of the Dragon and then will begin publishing the October issue. Another appointment that was made was that of a new Custodian of Memorabilia and his name is Patrick Schado. He was also approved by the Board of Trustees.

Another item of great importance that was implemented was the revision of our new Standard Operating Procedures. Mike Horn reviewed our present SOP and made some necessary changes that enhanced the duties and responsibilities of all Officers of the Association, both Elected and appointed. This revised form was presented to the Board and, with a few minor corrections and changes, was unanimously approved. Copies will be made available at our Membership meeting in San Diego in September.

Our 15th Infantry Regiment Website was in need of change and repair. We had been operating under the Sergeant Major's Association site. Mike Horn conducted a survey and presented the costs of the program along with his recommendations for the best choice. The proposals were mailed to all Board members for their perusal and subsequent approval. With the approval of the Board, I authorized Mike to make all necessary arrangements to establish our new website. Our current website will continue until the new one is set into place. The membership will be notified of the new website address when it becomes operational.

The plans for the Regimental Banquet scheduled for September 16, 2005 in San Diego, are coming along smoothly but somewhat slow. At this time I urge all members attending to get their reservations in early so that we know how many we can plan for. We want to make this evening another successful affair like we have in the past.

Ed's Message continues on Page 7

New Association Members

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| BG James Terry 14 Leray Drive Ft Drum, NY, 13602 | Henry Flaack, Sr. 8460 Relente Ct. Las Vegas, NV 89117 | Hugh Fitch 2288 S. Term St. Burton, MI 48519-1031 |
| John R. Munkitrick 64 Prairie Ave Siffern, NY 10901 B Co, 1 Bn 1946-49, 1950-51 | James S. Blackwell 185 Jordan Rd. Plymouth, MA 02360 HHC, 1 Bn 1983-1986 | Dale L. Geise 1051 X Ave Boone, IA 50036 K Co, 3 Bn Apr 52- Oct 53 |
| Paul G. Noel 404 Julian Ave Lansing, MI 48917-2745 1st Bn Jul 2002- Sep 2004 | | |

Websites Worth A Peek

<http://www.stripesonline.com/index.asp> - Stars and Stripes is a Department of Defense-authorized daily newspaper distributed overseas for the U.S. military community.

<http://www.emorylbennettfoundation.org> - The city of Cocoa, Florida will place a monument in the River Front Park in the memory of Medal of Honor recipient Emory L. Bennett. The city has established the non-profit Emory L. Bennett Foundation charged with erecting and maintaining a public memorial to MOH recipient Emory. L. Bennett. This website provides great information related to this Korean War Company B veteran.

Pre-dawn raid in Tikrit yields little

1-15 soldiers hunt insurgents who fired mortars on FOB Danger

By Charlie Coon, Stars and Stripes

Mideast edition, Thursday, March 31, 2005

EAST TIKRIT, Iraq — Mortars had been fired five days earlier into Forward Operating Base Danger, headquarters of the 42nd Infantry Division. A few people were wounded, but no one was killed.

About 10 miles south at FOB Wilson, soldiers from two platoons of 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, acting on intelligence received from FOB Danger, embarked Easter Sunday on a pre-dawn raid to find the insurgents.

The soldiers drove down a dark road with lights out, parked their Humvees and scurried to the front of a small house. An old man and woman, a younger woman and baby were awakened and asked to sit outside on a cement slab. They were in bare feet or sandals and wore sleeping clothes. The air was so cold breath could be seen.

The soldiers searched the two-room house as its heat escaped through the opened door. Sleeping mats and blankets were on the floor.

“This is the wrong house,” 2nd Lt. Jeff Goulet, a platoon leader, said after the 10-minute search.

As the family went back inside, the soldiers drove to the correct house, a much larger home with a fruit orchard in back. The white gate at the end of its driveway was secured by a chain and padlock.

Iraqi soldiers who accompanied the Americans barked in Arabic for its occupants to come outside. After no response, they threw rocks against the side of the house.

A U.S. soldier was ordered to shoot off the padlock using his rifle. The muzzle flashed in the darkness and sparks flew. The lock didn't budge. He took another shot. And another. The lock held.

The soldiers start chuckling. The company commander, Capt. Morgan Southern, stomped over and chewed them out for not covering their backs, and the soldiers scrambled into a defensive posture and took a knee, rifles pointed outward.

A Humvee pulled up and budged open the gate.

Iraqi and U.S. soldiers sidled up to the door, rifles at the ready, and an Iraqi soldier knocked. A light came on and the door opened. Inside were two old women who looked bewildered.

The women claimed no one else was inside. A U.S. soldier speaking through an interpreter told one of the women, “If anyone else is in there, they're going to get shot.”

The woman yelled back: “If anyone else is in here, you can shoot them.”

A 20-minute search of the house yielded one AK-47 rifle wrapped in a blanket, which Iraqis are allowed to possess for self-defense. On the wall of a nearby chicken coop, a soldier found an old, tattered poster of Saddam Hussein.

An Apache helicopter crew hovering overhead reported someone near the farmhouse across the street. Some of the soldiers left the target house and trotted across the road as darkness started giving way to morning light.

As soldiers took their positions, an Iraqi soldier knocked at the door. Inside were seven females and six males, ranging in age from grandparent to toddler. They trickled outside still in their nightclothes; a few threw on robes or coats.

Inside, U.S. and Iraqi soldiers searched the upstairs and downstairs rooms. One Iraqi soldier aggressively rooted through a box of clothes.

Nothing was found in the outbuildings.

The battalion commander, Lt. Col. Gary Brito, had come along on the raid.

“Looks like a dry hole,” he said.

Article by Charlie Coon. Used with permission from the Stars and Stripes a DoD publication. © 2005 Stars and Stripes

Task Force China Trains Iraqi Army

By 1LT Eric Motzenbecker

Task Force 3-15 Infantry has been hard at work since being deployed to Iraq as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom III. Their mission is a difficult one and is fought on many different levels. TF 3-15 IN is busy at work participating in operations training Iraqi Security Forces, defeating Anti Iraqi Forces and aiding in the development of the Iraqi Government.

An imperative aspect of Task Force 3-15's mission and overall success is the training of the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF). TF 3-15 IN is responsible for training the 3rd Iraqi Army Battalion, part of the newly formed 2nd Iraqi Army Brigade.

The 3rd Iraqi Army Battalion, known as "War Eagle," is located directly adjacent to the China Battalion at Camp Hope. This facilitates productive training on a daily basis. Under the watch of Captain Zan Hornbuckle, a cadre referred to as a Military Assistance Team (MAT) was formed and tasked with training the Iraqi soldiers. The MAT works with the soldiers on a daily basis on tasks such as marksmanship, basic movement techniques, close quarters combat, basic battle tracking and staff functions. In addition to the excellent training that the IAB soldiers receive, they also participate in joint patrols. They patrol along side the China soldiers as part of their formation. The Iraqi Army soldiers are also responsible for securing a multitude of critical infrastructures in the city.

Since Task Force 3-15's arrival, the MATs have developed the Iraq Army Battalion by improving their skills and confidence tremendously. The War Eagle Battalion is eager to take ownership of their city and is well on their way to being the main security force for their country.



Captain Zan Hornbuckle, HHC Commander, and LT Adel Ali , a platoon leader with the 3/2 Iraqi Army Battalion, discuss training prior to conducting a RPG range.



An Iraqi soldier, at left, checks rear security as members of 3rd Battalion, 2d Brigade Iraqi Army Battalion conduct a joint patrol of Sadr City, Iraq with soldiers of A Co, 3rd Battalion.

Ed's Message continued from Page 11

Through the fine efforts of John Burke and LTC Gary Brito, we have made arrangements with the 1st Battalion to provide the Color Guard for our banquet as well as for the Society banquet.

At the Reunion we will have our membership meeting on Thursday, September 15, 2005, at 3:00 PM, at which time we will conduct Association business and have our election of new officers. The installation and swearing in of these new officers will be done at our Banquet the following evening, September 16, 2005. Also awards to some of the outgoing Officers will be presented at this time.

At this time I want to express my sincere thank those of you that have helped me in conducting the business affairs of our fine group the past three and a half years. Our association with our active troops has been very close thanks to the splendid cooperation extended by the Commanders of the two Battalions. My special thanks go to LTC John Charlton, former Commander of the 1st Battalion, and to his successor, LTC Gary Brito, and to the Commander of the 3rd Battalion, LTC Gary Luck. These three men, and their respective units, played a very important part in assisting our Association in keeping the spirit and traditions of the "Can Do" Regiment going forward and we will always support them and pray for their safe return home.

In conclusion, I want to say that I am very proud to be a member of the 15th Regiment Association. I have been privileged to serve as its President the past three and a half years and hope to serve it in another capacity well into the future. There were some trying times but these were overshadowed by the progress that we made. I want to wish the new President my best wishes and will assist him in any way that I can. My sincere thanks to all of the membership and may we continue to make our group the finest that we can.

Historian's Report

By Tim Stoy

"The soldiers were reliable and experienced. We never worried when the 3d Infantry Division was at our side." These words were spoken by a veteran of the 75th Infantry Division, Mr. Joe Feeney, who came to visit with his wife Mary Anne the site of his unit's fighting, and with whom we spoke during our recent trip to Alsace to participate in celebrations of the 60th anniversary of liberation in many Alsatian towns and villages.

I thought you surviving veterans of the difficult fighting in the Battle of the Colmar Pocket would enjoy hearing that.

Monika and I participated in 31 ceremonies and related events in the time frame 12 December 2004 to 7 February 2005. Not all events were connected to the 3d Infantry Division; several honored the 28th Infantry Division, the 36th Infantry Division, the 75th Infantry Division, and the units of the 1st French Army. At all events in which we participated, the Alsatian people extended their thanks and appreciation for their liberators, young men who fought in difficult conditions against a tough adversary. We extended, on your behalf, best wishes and congratulations on the 60th anniversary of their liberation, and emphasized that in the face of the threat of terrorism the United States and France need to stand together, as they did in World War II.

I would like to highlight the events in which we participated that were connected to the 3d Infantry Division. Beginning 12 December, the communities of Ammerschwihr, Kaysersberg, and Kientzheim celebrated a combined ceremony. Wreaths were laid at the American monument at the Necropole above Sigolsheim (Hill 351), followed by the dedication of a monument to the 5th French Armored Division in Kientzheim. A retired French 3-star general, who served in the battles in Alsace as a young lieutenant, was highly commendatory of the US soldiers who fought along with him in the Colmar pocket battles. I also delivered comments at the reception following the ceremony.

At Christmas, we were able to participate in ceremonies in Bennwihr and Mittelwihr, both on the 24th of December. The ceremony in Bennwihr was wonderful, with the children reading the memoirs of their grandparents who had been in the village at the time of its liberation during a morning mass. I once again delivered comments in front of a full church, over 400 persons, most of whom were village residents. The Mass was followed by a very touching ceremony at the village's war monument. We also presented to the school children of Bennwihr several boxes of English language books in an effort to help the French children learn English.



This was our first delivery, of what we hope will be many.

We believe that the friendship and respect the WWII generation of soldiers shares with the French citizens they liberated 60 years ago should not be allowed to wither as the veterans and older citizens pass away. That is why we are trying to impress on the children we meet the price that was paid by our soldiers so that they could grow up free, and hope they will learn enough English to be able to speak to any visiting Americans. In 60 years we hope their memories of their childhood contacts with those veterans that visited them and people like Tim and I will help them have a positive image of America.

Mittelwihr had a solemn, low key ceremony in the evening following a church service. Both villages held expositions of photos and artifacts from the battles that raged through most of December. It was amazing to see that both villages were completely destroyed, and then to see how well they have recovered.

We returned to Alsace the last week of January 2005. We had a very full schedule of events, which grew as we met village mayors at the various events who would subsequently invite us to their own ceremonies. The village of Housсен, which absorbed the village of Rosenkrantz, dedicated a monument to CMH recipient PFC Jose Valdez of the 7th Infantry Regiment on 25 January. The monument stands outside a small chapel, which during the Middle Ages was the site of a pilgrimage. I held the remarks at the reception on behalf of the US Army and the 3d Infantry Division. We have asked the Mayor to include the Marne Patch on the Valdez monument and he has promised to do so. We also presented the Mayor a framed Department of the Army seal for display in the courthouse.

Historian continued on next page.



The following day, the village of Riedwihr held its ceremony, beginning with a memorial mass, then with a ceremony at the monument to the dead, and concluded with a reception at the multipurpose hall. Again I spoke on behalf of the nation and the division.

On 27 January the village of Holtzwihr held its ceremony. The celebration began with a memorial mass. After mass, the village unveiled a very nice marble tablet with pictures engraved upon it from the period of the war. Monika assisted the Mayor, Mr. Gerber, in unveiling a sign designating the place in front of the church as the Place de la Liberation, with the Marne patch prominently displayed in honor of the liberators. Initially the sign had not included the patch, but we were able to convince the Mayor that the blue and white belongs there. Our intention is that every village and town in France, beginning in Alsace, where the division fought displays the Marne patch in some prominent location. We also presented to him another framed Department of the Army seal and a large framed set of pictures from the 3d Infantry Division veterans' visit to Holtzwihr in August.

On 29 January we participated in three ceremonies connected to the Marne Division -Sigolsheim, Muntzenheim, and Jebsheim. At Sigolsheim, the Rhine-Danube Veterans (French) paid tribute to our US soldiers with a large ceremony at the Necropole above Sigolsheim. I laid a wreath at the monument and made the keynote address. It was quite cold but these French veterans were sincere in their heartfelt affection for our soldiers. The ceremony concluded with a large reception hosted in Sigolsheim by the mayor. Muntzenheim held a small, solemn ceremony at its monument to the dead, laying a wreath and with the Mayor holding a short speech. This was followed by a short reception at the fire hall. I again was asked to make some comments. Jebsheim was liberated by the 254th Infantry while it was attached to the 3d Infantry Division fighting in concert with French soldiers of the Foreign Legion, the First Regiment Chasseur Parachutiste, and the Premier Battalion de Choc. Monika held the keynote speech and laid a wreath at the village monument. The Regimental Commander with color guard and honor company from the 1st RCP participated in the ceremony, as well as the Army Band from the military district of Paris.



On Sunday 30 January Colmar held its ceremony. The keynote speech was held by the French Defense Minister. Frankly, the ceremony was disappointing as our National Anthem was not played, nor was our Consul General invited to speak even though he was on the reviewing stand. The only Americans in uniform present were Monika and I. This was a far cry from the 50th anniversary ceremony, where the senior US representative was the Ambassador to France, the senior military representative was an Army Lieutenant General, with an honor company and color guard marching in the parade.

On 2 February we participated in ceremonies in Kunheim and Biesheim. Biesheim laid wreaths at the monument it erected to the 3d Infantry Division several years ago, and we laid a wreath at the nearby monument to T/Sgt Peden, CMH

Historian continued on next page.

Historian continued from Page 9

recipient, during the fighting there. Kunheim celebrated in the evening with wreaths being laid at the monument to the dead, with children reading poems and singing during the ceremony.

On 5 February we represented the Division and the country at the ceremony in Volgelsheim. It was a marvelous ceremony, with a fabulous fireworks display to end the evening. Mayor Mann addressed us and you veterans directly in English during his remarks. It was a remarkable effort as he never learned English in school, and he practiced all week to be able to express his gratitude. Soldiers of the French-German Brigade participated in the ceremony. And on 6 February Neuf-Brisach held its ceremony in the morning. The day began with a memorial Mass, followed by the dedication of a tablet honoring a citizen of the village who had risked his life to leave the fortress and inform the attacking Americans that the Germans had already withdrawn. Then there was a ceremony at the town monument. Both the 3d Infantry and the 75th Infantry Divisions entered the village on the same day in February 1944. The 75th Division has emplaced a memorial plaque on the town's monument to the dead. We ensured that the mayor understood that the 3d Division had also been there, and he expressed willingness to include a 3d Infantry Division plaque.

Each village celebrated its own liberation in its own way, some with solemn recognition of the lives lost, and others with a greater sense of joy for their liberation. Having been there for the 50th anniversary ceremonies ten years ago, it is good to see that the Alsatian people still appreciate the role our soldiers played in their liberation. Necessarily the number of veterans is much decreased, as is the number of older citizens. We were uniformly impressed with the number of communities that made a great effort to involve their children in the commemorations. We only met three US veterans at the ceremonies we attended, Mr. Feeney of the 75th Division, Mr. Stephens of the 28th Division, and Mr. Checha of the 12th Armored Division. Of course, the 3d Infantry Division tour came through Alsace in August as part of the celebrations in Provence.



The 3rd Battalion paid special tribute on Memorial Day, 30 May 2005, to honor those from the Battalion who have fallen in the war on terror.

**Thirteenth Annual Regimental Dinner
of the
15th Infantry Regiment Association
Reservation Form**

Red Lion Hotel
San Diego, CA
7:00 P.M. 16 September 2005

Name _____ Guest Name _____

Unit _____
Service Period: WWII Korean War Cold War ODS Iraqi Freedom ReadyForces
Check Number _____

| Event | Number | Price | Total |
|----------------------------------|--------|---------|-------|
| Regimental Dinner | | | |
| London Broil | | \$32.00 | |
| Lemon Pepper Chicken | | \$32.00 | |
| Enclosed is my payment for _____ | | | |

Dinner reservations and payment must be made prior to September 5, 2005 – There can be no walk-ins.
Members of other units are welcome to join us !!!

Make your Check or Money Order payable to: Treasurer, 15th Infantry Regiment Association.
Send your dinner reservation and payment to: Lloyd D. Whitmer, Treasurer,
7500 Mose Street,
Navarre, Ohio 44662
330-756-2803
whitmerld@sssnet.com

Room reservations must be made with the hotel.

**Association
Annual Business Meeting
September 15, 2005**

The Annual Business Meeting of the Association will be held on Thursday, September 15, 2005 at 3:00 PM at the Red Lion Hotel in San Diego. The meeting is being held in conjunction with the Society of the Third Infantry Division Reunion. The election of the Association Officers for the 2005-2007 term will be conducted during this business meeting. All Association members are invited to attend.



A Co, 3rd Battalion secures a key intersection during daylight raid in Sadr City, Iraq. With a population approaching 3 million people, Sadr City remains a model of security when comparing it to other Baghdad area neighborhoods. TF 3-15 IN recently transitioned authority of portions of Sadr City into the control of the 3rd Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division.

15th Infantry Regiment Association
Michael J. Horn, Editor
1833 Walker Ridge Drive
Marietta, GA 30064-4193

Return Service Requested

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit # 111
Marietta, GA

