

## *Fifteenth Infantry Regiment*



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15<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment Association Newsletter

April 2005

### **OPERATION DRAGON SWEEP**

By LTC Gary Brito

The 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of Fort Benning fame recently conducted an operation aimed at identifying and capturing insurgents involved with Improvised Explosives Devices (IED) in a city north of Baghdad, along the Tigris River in the middle of the Sunni Triangle.

Dealing with the IED has been almost a daily event somewhere in the battalion area of responsibility. Fortunately, due the diligence of the soldiers, in conjunction with the superb efforts of a team from an Explosive Ordnance Detachment (EOD), the IED has not been as effective as the terrorists would hope. The soldiers of Task Force 1-15, *DRAGONS*, have identified and destroyed more IEDs than have been effectively detonated against them.

As the soldiers patrol the streets, they keep a keen eye on suspected IED locations. Best put by a young machine gunner, “After a while, you know when something looks funny or out of place.”

**OPERATION DRAGON SWEEP** was a battalion level operation that involved an armor company, a mechanized infantry company, EOD, direct support OH58 helicopters, a tactical psychological operations team (PSYOPS), and Air force Predator and F18 coverage. Additionally, the infantry company was augmented with a few squads from an Iraqi Army company under the tactical control of the task force.

The operation began in the early morning hours with the establishment of a tight outer cordon around the objective area using M1 Abrams tanks and Bradley Fighting vehicles. Civilian traffic was not allowed in or out of the cordon while the operation unfolded. Just before the bright early morning sun began to rise over the east side of the Tigris River, a tactical psychological operations team hmv mounted with a loudspeaker began to broadcast a message (in Arabic) for the citizens to stay secure in the homes while the US forces conducted a search on known target locations and cache sites. The use of the PSYOPS team proved to be a huge multiplier both before and after the operation.

Next, the infantrymen, supported by the Bradley fighting vehicles and tanks in over-watch and aviation, began locating known “target” individuals. Within four hours, seven suspected insurgent supporters were in custody. After some pointed “on the street” interrogation the seven were detained and transported the task force detention center. As the operation concluded, the loudspeaker team broadcasted another message informing the citizens that they could safely enter the street. Almost immediately, store fronts opened and people began to crowd the streets.

The operation was swift and precise, and led to follow on information resulting in the capture of a cache of 155mm artillery and mortar rounds— common munitions used in IEDs.

All in all, the operation was a big success. The soldiers of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion “CAN-DO” will continue to support the efforts to build a safe, secure and self-reliant Iraq.

#### **Echo Company in Iraq**

By CPT David Stanley

The soldiers of 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion continue to endure the hardships of the initial phases of the deployment. Echo Company took some hard earned time off to reenlist two of the Battalion’s soldiers. SSG Jimmy Oates, of Second Platoon, displayed his commitment to our Army as he volunteered for indefinite status. SGT Everton Joseph (in the photo on the right) of First Platoon, displayed his commitment to our unit and our Nation as he reenlisted for six additional years.

CPT Stanley (left) presenting reenlistment certificate to SGT Joseph (right).



*The Dragon*

**Officers**

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Edward Dojutrek.....President  
 Michael J. Horn.....Editor  
 Lloyd D. Whitmer .....Treasurer

**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 15<sup>th</sup> 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  
 rguimond@tampabay.rr.com

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

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

**Commander, 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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**  
 950<sup>th</sup> 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



### James Bass

James Bass, formerly of St. George, UT, died March 3, 2005. He proudly served with L Company, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion during WW II. Born in 1919, James was an Association member since 1997. Reported by his wife, Molly.

### SPC Justin B. Carter

Specialist Justin B. Carter died February 16, 2005. He was born on 26 October 1982 in Wichita, Kansas. He entered our Army in October 2002 at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri where he attended Basic Training and Advanced Individual Training. Following AIT, SPC Carter was assigned to A Co, 2nd Engineers, Camp Castle, Korea where he served as a Unit Armorer until February 2004.

SPC Carter returned to the United States and was assigned to Fort Benning March 2004. At the time of his death, SPC Carter had served 11 months in Echo Company as a Combat Engineer and as the Unit Armorer at Fort Benning, Georgia.

SPC Carter's awards include the Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, the Korean Service Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Army Service Ribbon, and the Overseas Service Ribbon.

SPC Carter's survivors include, his mother and her husband, Becky and Brett Misemer and his father William Carter.

### Richard S. Curry

Richard passed away on December 23, 2004, at his home in Fresno, California. Richard was a member of the Association since 1997. During the Korean War he served as a Sergeant in King Company from June 1952 to April 1953. Reported by his son, John.

### Vaughn G. Evans

Vaughn G. Evans passed away April 9, 2004. Vaughn was an Association member since 1994. During WW II he served in Company. L, 3rd Battalion. Reported by his wife, Barbara.

### Erwin C. Kroger

Erwin died February 13, 2005. He attended just about every Rendezvous and the Society of the 3rd Div Reunions over the past 10 years. At the time of his death Erwin lived in Fort Myers, FL. He served with Golf Company in the Korean War, 1951-1952. Erwin was an Association member since 1997. Reported by John Burke.

### PFC Lee A. Lewis

PFC Lee A. Lewis was killed in action by a sniper March 20, 2005. Lee served in Iraq as a combat medic with HHC, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion. His hometown was Norfolk, VA.

## Chaplains Corner

By LTC Chuck Trout, Sr.

In 1998 my wife and I had the privilege of traveling to Jerusalem. What a wonderful experience and opportunity to meet some really neat people. Many Jewish families attach a "mezuzah" to their door posts as a reminder of God's presence. The mezuzah (In Hebrew it means doorpost) is a small case containing a prayer. Many Jewish people here in the United States, and around the world do the same thing. Each time they leave their home, they run their fingers over the mezuzah which is symbolic of saying, "God be with me and protect me as I travel into the world today." At the same time they touch the mezuzah, they recite Psalm 121:8, "The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even forevermore."

Each mezuzah parchment is carefully written by qualified scribes, using very strict procedures. It is then rolled and placed in its case so that the word "Shaddai" meaning Almighty appears through a small hole near the top.

What a wonderful example for all of us. To pause a moment as we begin our day. To thank our Creator for all He has given us, for this great country, and for the protection of our military wherever they might be serving. And by the way, my prayers include each one of you. God bless you!



## Troop Support Program

By Ed Dojutrek

In the last issue of the Dragon included an article on the Associations Troop Support Program. The project was a great success and well received by the Troops of both Battalions. John Burke, Henry Burke, and other Association members visited both Battalions and made presentations. The Troops of 1<sup>st</sup> Bn received their gifts of a stationary packet and the sand colored Bandana at Fort Benning the first week of January. Troops of 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn received theirs the following week at Fort Stewart, Georgia, prior to their departure for Iraq (see photos on pages 7 and 11).

We appealed to the membership for donations to cover the cost of the project but, thus far, those donations have been lagging. At this time I urge all members to dig a little deeper and help us in this very worthy cause. This is the least that we can do to show our appreciation for our fighting troops. This update will tend to remind those of you who have not contributed to send a donation. And a special thanks for those who have already done so.

**Mail Call**

Don Hickey  
 35575 N Greenleaf Ave  
 Ingleside, Illinois 60041  
 (847)973-2545  
 Bluenoser@covad.net



I'm writing to you to hear from any members who would have served with my grandfather, John P. Hickey (Jack). He served in Company H as a radio operator from North Africa to Germany. I would appreciate hearing from anyone who may have known him. I know little about his service. Thanks for your time.

Mark Embrey  
 PO Box 386  
 Elwood, KS 66024  
 mark1@carsoncomm.com

My dad was 1SG Bill Embrey. He served in Company E in Korea from March 1951 to March 1952. I'd like to hear from anyone that may remember him and could share any stories or recollections about him.

Paul Gelles  
 309 North 300 West  
 Blackfoot, ID 83221

I am looking for old Army buddies that served in Company L in Korea on Hill 159 during 1950-1952.

Ramona Castro  
 131 Stutson Street,  
 Rochester NY 14612.  
 rsrathke@frontiernet.net

Corporal Pedro Castro, I believe, was a member of Easy Company. He was KIA, in N. Korea on 6-11-53. My family has little to no information on my grandfather and his experiences. We know of no one who fought bravely by his side. We are desperate to hear anything about Pedro Ortiz Castro. If anyone has any information about him or pictures to share we would be very grateful. No thought or remembrance is too insignificant. I thank everyone in advanced who will help us bring some light into our lives. God Bless.

Joseph M. Poissons  
 104 Dingess Street  
 Narrows, VA 24124

Enclosed is my check for lifetime membership in the 15<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment Association.

**WHO DO YOU KNOW?**

Who do you know that is a 15<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment veteran and not a member of the Association? Each Association member is encouraged to spread the word of our Association and invite someone to become a member. Clip or copy the Application For Membership below and provide to other Can Do veterans.

**Application For Membership**  
*15<sup>th</sup> 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 15<sup>th</sup> 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, 15<sup>th</sup> Infantry Reg't Association.

Mail to:

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

**Mail Call continues on next page.**

**Non-Infantry Soldiers Get Combat Badge****Associated Press**

February 19, 2005

WASHINGTON - The Army is creating a combat badge for soldiers who come under fire in close combat in Iraq and Afghanistan but who are not otherwise eligible for special recognition because they are from armor, artillery or other non-infantry units.

Soldiers from foreign armies, such as the Iraqi army, who are assigned to U.S. Army units in close combat, also will be eligible for the special recognition, officials said Friday.

The new badge, called the Close Combat Badge, will settle an emotional debate that has raged within the Army and was settled only last week by the service's most senior generals.

The disparity at issue is that infantrymen and non-infantry soldiers who face the same risks in the same gun battle at close range are treated differently by the Army in terms of badges.

Until now, only infantrymen who participated in direct combat missions and came under fire were given the Combat Infantryman Badge, a coveted distinction that counts in their favor when eligible for

Since the wars began in Afghanistan and Iraq, the inequity became increasingly controversial within the Army - particularly in the case of Iraq, where some cavalry scouts and other non-infantry soldiers have been reorganized into infantry-like units to perform infantry-like close combat missions.

Several of the most senior Army commanders in Iraq had written to Lt. Gen. Franklin Hagenbeck, the deputy chief of staff for personnel, asking that he grant exceptions to the limited eligibility rules for the Combat Infantryman Badge, in order to recognize the other soldiers.

Instead, Hagenbeck said in an interview Friday, the Army decided to preserve the rules for the Combat Infantryman Badge but also create the Close Combat Badge so that infantrymen would still have their own and others who performed infantry-like missions under fire would get special recognition, too.

"It's for the artilleryman who has been made a de facto infantryman," Hagenbeck said. The same applies to other ground combat soldiers like those in armor, combat engineering and cavalry, who have been called upon to do infantry missions and are personally present under fire.

It will be given, retroactive to Sept. 11, 2001, to eligible soldiers below the rank of colonel.

The badges are not awards for valor, like the Bronze Star. The precise eligibility rules are to be published by the Army in March, and senior officers then can issue the badges, Hagenbeck said.

**New Associate Member**

By John Burke

Mr. Frank Brown of Odyssey Printing, Columbus, GA, was recently appointed as an Associate Member of the Association in recognition of his outstanding contributions and support to the current active duty Battalions, 1-15 and 3-15. Attached is a photo of John Burke presenting the Associate Membership Certificate and Membership Card to Mr. Brown.

**Mail Call continued from prior page.**

I was in G Company, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion August 1951 to September 1952. I got out of the service in 1953 for 4 months, then reenlisted. I did another tour with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division in the latter part of the 1950s in Bamberg, Germany. I remained in the service for 20 years retiring as a Master Sergeant E8.

I was just a young kid when I joined the 15<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment in 1951. There were a lot of hard times and good times as well that I will never forget. I am looking forward to the 15<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment Association Life Membership Pin.

I've been in contact with 1<sup>st</sup> Sergeant Paul Roach from 1952. He lives in Roanoke, VA. We try to get together about twice a year.

God bless the 15<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment.

**Books Worth A Look**

**The United States 15<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment in China, 1912-1938** by Alfred Emile Cornebise, 284 page softcover. This work recounts and assesses some aspects of the involvement and service of the 15<sup>th</sup> Infantry during its quarter century in China between the World Wars. Also detailed is our Army's service in those years in general.

**New Association Members**

HARLAN ADOLPHSON  
329 CHARTIER  
MARINE CITY, MI 48039  
C CO, 1 BN  
1943-44

FRANK BROWN  
6928 VETERANS PKWY  
COLUMBUS, GA 31909  
ASSOCIATE

FREDRICK L BUCHHOLZ  
E-737 RD 8B  
HAMLER, OH 43524  
F CO, 2 BN  
MAR 53-JUN 54

STEVEN M CABRERA  
P.O. BOX 71  
WALNUT CREEK, CA 04597-0071  
B CO, 1 BN  
1974-77

GORDON V CARPENTER  
400 REDWOOD DR  
ELMIRA, NY 14904-3025  
E CO, 2 BN  
APR 53- APR 54

THOMAS E CHALMERS  
59 POTWINE LN  
AMHERST, MA 01002-3306  
C CO, 1 BN  
OCT 57- OCT 59

ALFRED B CLAUSEN  
PO BOX 312  
DEVILS ELBOW, MO 65457  
1 BG  
1960-61

JACKSON A CLIFFORD, SR  
1026 91 ST STREET  
GALVESTON, TX 77554-9175  
K CO, 3 BN  
1945

JACOB R COLVIN  
770 SUMMIT DRIVE  
DALLASTOWN, PA 17313-9740  
SVC CO, REGT  
JAN-NOV 1953

ROBERT J CRAIG  
11230 - 5 DOLLAR LAKE DR  
PORT RICHEY, FL 34668-1905  
E, HHC, 2 BN  
JUL 40- AUG 43

CHARLES E DOUGHTY  
89 FAIRFIELD AVE  
PORT WASHINGTON, NY 11050  
1 BG  
1960-62

WILLIAM T DOWER  
5324 BAY POINT CT  
CAPE CORAL, FL 33904  
B CO, 1 BN  
1945-46

ROBERT W. EVANS  
23686 MARBLE QUARRY RD  
#64  
COLUMBIA, CA 95310-9781  
B CO, 1 BN, & HVY MORT  
MAY 53- SEP 54

JAMES L FIELDS  
4007 BRIARWOOD DR  
CATLETTSBURG, KY 41129-  
9302  
D CO, 1 BN  
SEP 52- SEP 54

WILLIAM A FINKE  
440 WIEGAND WAY  
DIXON, CA 95620-4415  
HHC, 2 BN  
AUG 51- SEP 52

RAYMOMD FLAHERTY  
600 OAK PARK CIRCLE  
MERRITT ISLAND, FL 32953  
L CO, 3 BN  
FEB-DEC 1952

JOHN R GARZIA  
1514 PINE TREE DR  
EDGEWATER, FL 32132-2508  
G CO, 2 BN  
1950-51

LEE W GERBER  
83 WAGON WHEEL DR  
ELLERSLIE, GA 31807  
HHC, 1 BN  
MAR 04- PRESENT

LESLIE E GOODWIN  
123 ITTAWAMBA DR  
SARDINIA, OH 45171-9265  
M CO, 3 BN  
NOV 43- SEP 45

ARON T HAUQUITZ  
701 BJORNSTAD ST  
FORT BENNING, GA 31905  
A/HQ, 1 BN  
SEPT 02- PRESENT

LLOYD F HUMPHREY, SR  
PO BOX 771  
KETTLE FALLS, WA 99141-0771  
HHC, REGT  
NOV 51- JAN 52

LOUIS L JARAMILLO  
924 ANITA AVE  
BELMONT, CA 94002-2011  
I CO, 3 BN  
APR 53- AUG 54

PAUL B KIMBALL  
38 WARREN ST  
WHIPPANY, NJ 7981  
M CO, 3 BN  
MAY 51- MAY 53

JOSEPH J KOLAR  
113 SEESE DR  
JOHNSTOWN, PA 15904-2636  
JUL 51- JUL 53

EDWARD D LESSOR  
510 OCEAN SPRAY DR  
SWANSBORO, NC 28584  
F CO, 2 BN  
JAN 51- JAN 52

HAROLD E LEWIS  
1304 LUDLOW TERRACE  
AUSTIN, TX 78723-3133  
HHC, 3 BN  
OCT 42- SEP 43

ROBERT A LITTLE  
2268 BANNISTER ST  
DELTONA, FL 32738  
HHC, 2 BN  
1949-1952

ROBERT A LONG  
C CO 2-17 FA  
APO, AE 09395-5416  
HHC, 1 BN  
JAN 99- JAN 01

ROBERT G LUZ  
156 SOUTH ROSE ST  
EAST PROVIDENCE, RI 2914  
A CO, 1 BN  
APR 52- APR 53

**New Members continued from Page 11**

HARLAN R MOWERY  
1159 W. LOGAN ST.  
FREEPORT, IL 61032  
E CO, 2 BN  
1943-1954

JAMES J O'DONNELL  
103 WOOD IBIS CT  
DAYTONA BEACH, FL 32119  
G CO, 2 BN  
1953

JOHN F PERRY  
P.O. BOX 5131  
SANTA MARIA, CA 93456  
B CO, 1 BN  
1951-53

JOHN R PICHOTTO  
4144 BARNER AVE  
OAKLAND, CA 94602  
HQ, REGT 1944-45

SAMEUL R PULIAFICO  
181 UPPER CHURCH ST  
WARE, MA 01082-1230  
CN CO, REGT  
JAN 44- SEP 45

RALPH A REED  
10702 W. CARON DR  
SUN CITY, AZ 85351-4640  
B CO, 1 BN  
1941

PATRICK J RODGER  
3150 N. HARBOR CITY BLVD. # 137  
MELBOURNE, FL 32935  
L CO, 3 BN  
OCT 43- MAY 45

LESTER C SCHAEFFER  
469 E. PALETOWN RD  
QUAKERTOWN, PA 18951-2834  
B CO, 1 BN  
1963-65

PETE M SCHOOLCRAFT  
15215 88TH AVE NE  
KENMORE, WA 98028  
D CO, 1 BN  
1940-1945

ROBERT D SHEEHAN  
606 WASHINGTON ST  
WELLESLEY, MA 02482-6413  
F CO, 2 BN  
FEB-APR 49

DON P SMITH  
20292 VISTA GRANDE DR  
AUSTIN, CO 81410-8292  
C CO, 1 BN  
JAN 44-JAN 44

ANDREW D STAPLES  
24308 NEWTOWN RD  
BOWLING GREEN, VA 22427  
HHC, 1 BN  
MAY 04- PRESENT

JOSEPH T STIPPICK, JR  
83 MT. CLEMENT AVE  
PINE HILL, NJ 08021-6230  
A, TK CO, 1 BN,REGT  
1952-53

JAMES G TILTON  
631 OXFORD BLVD.  
PITTSBURGH, PA 15243  
D CO, 1 BN  
MAY 44- FEB 45

WILLIAM J TRACEY, SR  
1459 PLEASANTVILLE DR  
GLEN BURNIE, MD 21061-2112  
A CO, 1 BN  
1952-53

JOHN WAGNER, JR  
1102 W. 2ND  
LA HARPE, KS 66751-1279  
HVY MOR, REGT  
MAY 53- OCT 54

RICHARD T. WHITTINGTON  
2212 WOODBURY DR  
HILLSBOROUGH, NC 27278  
A & HHC, 1 BN  
MAR 2000- APR 2004

JOHN H WINGLE  
534 HOLIDAY DR  
SCHUYLKILL HAVEN, PA  
17972-2148  
F CO, 2 BN  
1944-45

VERNON H WOLD  
721 STONEY RIDGE RD  
HEBER SPRINGS, AR 72543  
MED CO, 1 BN  
JUL 52- OCT 52

**Sick Call**



PVT Timothy Pope, 1-15 IN was wounded the last week of February in Iraq. His injuries resulted from an Improvised Explosive Device (IED). He is currently recovering from his wounds in Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Washington, DC. On March 9th, the Rear Detachment Commander from Fort Benning, 1LT Aron Hauquitz paid a visit to PVT Pope. He was joined in the visit by Tad Davis, the current nominee for President of the Association. Any Association members within commuting distance of the hospital are urged to visit PVT Pope and show your support.

1<sup>st</sup> Battalion soldier (at right) receives his Association bandana.



## Updates on Past Battalion Commanders

By John Burke

Since the organization of the Association in 1993 the Association has been extremely fortunate have had the support of the active duty battalion commanders. Upon their completion of their command time with the battalions, all moved on to positions of increased responsibility. Below is a short summary of their continued service and their status today.

MG John Batiste: 3-15 IN 1993-1994. As the Battalion Commander of the stateside unit then LTC Batiste was instrumental in working with the Honorary Colonel of the Regiment, MG Maurice Kendall (Ret) in organizing the Association. MG Batiste currently is Commander of the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division.

COL Billy Wells: 3-15 IN 1994-1996. Hosted on of the first annual Association meeting/reunion after the Constitution and Bylaws were formulated. In various assignments afterwards COL Wells commanded a Brigade. He has served as the Director of the Military Science Department at North Georgia College and State University since 2000. Will retire from active service April 2005.

BG Stephen Layfield: 1-15 IN 1995-1996. Last stateside assignment was the Assistant Commandant of the U.S. Army Infantry School during which he was promoted to BG. Currently serves in ARRC.

COL Edward Cook: 1-15 IN Feb – July 1996. Assumed command of 1-15 IN upon return from Germany and reflagging of 3<sup>rd</sup> ID units. Hosted first Association Meeting at Fort Benning. Later served in numerous challenging command and staff positions. Now retired from active service actively engaged in operating a horse farm in Kansas.

COL Tad Davis: 1-15 IN 1996-1998. Hosted the 1999 Rendezvous. Served in numerous command and staff positions including the Garrison Commander of Fort Bragg. Retired from active service in 2004. Currently serves as Acting Deputy Director, Office of the National Drug Control Policy, Office of the President.

COL Gordon Mereness: 3-15 IN 1997-1999. Later commanded 29<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment 2001-2003 and served as Director of Tactics, Fort Leavenworth 2003-2004. Assumed position as Chief of Staff of the 42<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division in 2004, a position he currently holds in Iraq.

COL Bob Pricone: 1-15 IN 1998-2000. Hosted the 2000 Can Do Rendezvous. After Can Do service served in various command and staff positions worldwide. Recently completed 13 months deployed in Iraq as the III Corps G3, Chief of Operations. Slated to assume command of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Regiment, The Old Guard, in June 2005.

COL Stefan Banach: 3-15 IN 1999-2001. Commanded the Battalion on deployment to Bosnia. Hosted the 2001 Rendezvous. Later commanded the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ranger Battalion with combat jumps into Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003. Attended the War College and will assume a Brigade Command in May 2005.

LTC Stephen Twitty: 3-15 IN 2001-2003. Led the Battalion in deployment to Kuwait and in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Currently attending the National War College and is

slated for Brigade command in 2005.

LTC John Charlton: 1-15 IN 2002-2004. Led the Battalion in deployment to Kuwait and in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Hosted the 2004 Can Do Rendezvous. Currently serving as the G-3 of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division (M).

Our thanks to these former battalion commanders and to LTC Gary Luck, Jr. currently commanding the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion and LTC Gary Brito currently commanding the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion both of whom are serving in Iraq.

### Presidents Message

By Ed Dojutrek

Much has been accomplished in the Association since my last message. We have successfully completed our Troop Support Program. The presentations were made to both Battalions prior to their departure back to Iraq in January. Many thanks were accorded the Association for their thoughtfulness in implementing the program for the benefit of the troops.

Since their arrival in Iraq both Battalions have been very active. Operation Dragon Sweep conducted by the 1<sup>st</sup> Bn is described in detail by LTC Brito in this Newsletter. It was a very successful operation that demonstrated the fighting abilities of our young "Can Doers" of the 15th Regiment. The last sentence of the article tells it all. "The soldiers of the 1st Bn "Can Do" will continue to support the efforts to build a safe, secure and self-reliant Iraq."

However, the conditions that are encountered sometimes end in tragedy. In this issue of the Dragon you'll see taps reported on two of our soldiers. Our condolences and deep sympathy have been expressed to their families on the loss of their loved ones.

Preparations are being made for our upcoming Regimental Dinner at the 3rd Society Reunion scheduled for Sept. 15 - 18 of this year. Our Banquet will be held at 7:00 PM on Friday, Sept. 16, 2005. Those of you planning to attend should complete the reservation form on Page 11 and send along with your check to our Treasurer, Lloyd Whitmer, no later than September 5th.

We are in the process of electing a new slate of Officers for our Association. The nominee for President is COL (R) Tad Davis. His brief Bio is on Page 8. The absentee ballot for the election was printed in the last issue of the Dragon for those not attending the Reunion. For those attending, the voting will be held at our Membership meeting, time and date to be announced.

Another item on the agenda is our Annual Raffle. Dick Guimond, our Raffle Chairman, has mailed the tickets out to the membership for their participation and support. Thus far, the responses have been very gratifying and I thank the membership for their support.

In closing I want to express my thanks to all of the members of the Association for their continuing efforts in supporting our great organization. "Can Do".



## Historian's Report

By Tim Stoy

On 12 December, the three communities of Kientzheim, Ammerschwihr, and Kaysersberg celebrated the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of their liberation in December 1944 by French and American forces. Monika and I were able to attend their joint ceremony in Kientzheim, hosted by Mayor Schmitt.

The day began with a wreath laying ceremony at the US forces monument at the Necropole on Hill 351 at 0930. Lise Pommois and I laid a wreath in honor of the soldiers of the 3d and 36<sup>th</sup> Infantry Divisions. The US Consul General from Strasburg, Christopher Davis, also attended. Unfortunately the ceremony was not very well attended due to the majority of the townspeople already having gathered in Kientzheim for the ceremony at the Rathaus.



Wreath Laying with Consul General Davis to my left

Following the wreath laying ceremony we traveled to the town center where we joined the dignitaries and townspeople for the parade to the church. The senior dignitary of the day was General du Corps de Armees Sciard, who had served as a Lieutenant with the 5<sup>th</sup> French Armored Division in the fighting in Alsace and was present at the liberation of Kientzheim. He is now 82 and retired. The Prefet (regional administrator) and the mayors of Kientzheim, Ammerschwihr and Kaysersberg were also present.

Upon arriving at the church, the dignitaries laid wreaths at the monument to the war dead, following which everyone went into the church for an ecumenical service. At the conclusion of the service all moved to the Sherman tank situated at the western entrance to the village of Kientzheim, where General Sciard, as president of the national association of the 5<sup>th</sup> French Armored Division unveiled a plaque in honor of that division, which liberated Kientzheim in December 1944. In his remarks he emphasized the great teamwork he experienced between his forces and those of the Americans he served with, and reiterated just how bloody the fighting in the area between Kaysersberg and Bennwihr really was. Monika joined the General in laying a wreath at the plaque, then the General awarded medals of military service to three French veterans before the ceremony concluded.

Afterwards all adjourned to the nearby hall where the various dignitaries delivered their comments, again with the General saying many positive things about the Americans he served with. I also delivered comments, thanking the villages for remembering our soldiers, and congratulating them on their liberation sixty years ago. I also reminded them that freedom is not free, and that the US and France will hopefully stand together again to insure that these villages remain free sixty years from now.

The conclusion to the day's activities was a luncheon in the multi-purpose hall of the village of Kaysersberg, where we continued to have a lively discussion with General Sciard and the three village mayors.

Two weeks later we returned to Alsace to represent the Division and Regiment at the liberation ceremony in Bennwihr on 24 December. The ceremony began with a remembrance service in the church, where the various civilian casualties of the village were memorialized with recitations of letters written by descendants of villagers who lived through the fighting, and with the lighting of votive lights by children in traditional Alsatian dress. The villagers also remembered the soldiers who fought in the village, on both sides. Various dignitaries made speeches, and I again had the opportunity to make some comments. I thanked the village for their remembering the sacrifices of the soldiers, and also reminded them of the requirement to be ready in the future to defend their liberty. The church was full, standing room only, with over 400 people in attendance.

Following the service, we moved outside to the town's monument, the only thing left standing by 24 December 1944, where children in traditional dress helped the mayor unveil a plaque to the civilians killed in the war. The local musicians played the American and French national anthems with aplomb, and Monika again helped to lay a wreath at the base of the monument. It was a very well organized and touching ceremony, made especially memorable by the children in traditional costume

**Historian continued on next page.**



The remembrance service



Young Alsatian girls in costume

Once the ceremony was concluded, all moved to the village meeting hall for the opening of an exhibition on the village in 1944 and the rebuilding since then. It was incredible to compare the village in the state it was in at the end of the war and today. The villagers did a wonderful job in rebuilding. The ceremonies were very well organized and the villagers obviously happy to have us there as the representatives of the young men who regained them their liberty 60 years ago.



Monument in  
Benwihr



Monika after laying wreath with Mayor Fuchs of Benwihr

In the evening Mittelwihr had a small ceremony at its war monument situated in the ruins of the church that had been destroyed in December 1944. The mayor and several other dignitaries laid a wreath at the monument with the mayor making some short comments, the fire company provided the guard of honor, the pastor spoke a few words, and the local band played the Marseilles. It was a short, bittersweet remembrance of a difficult period. The mayor thanked us for attending and then everyone went home for Christmas dinner.

On the 26<sup>th</sup> of December we visited Mittelwihr's exposition on the war and the rebuilding of the town. Just as in Benwihr, it was amazing to see the amount of destruction that took place, as well as the great strides in rebuilding.

The next series of remembrance ceremonies we will be able to attend will be held at the end of January. These will include ceremonies in Holtzwihr, Colmar, and Sigolsheim. As in my last report, it is a great honor for Monika and me to represent the brave men who fought in France sixty years ago.



### Through the Eyes of a Gunner

Task Force 1-15 IN recently participated in a brigade level operation in the ancient city of Samarra, north of Baghdad. The purpose was to find and eliminate all terrorists cells. The **DRAGONS** established a guard along the eastern side of the city to facilitate the offensive operations inside the city boundaries. This is the view through the gunners' hatch of an armored HMMWV. The crew is from Baker Company. A mosque can be seen in the background.

**Thirteenth Annual Regimental Dinner  
of the  
15<sup>th</sup> 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			
<b>London Broil</b>		\$32.00	
<b>Lemon Pepper Chicken</b>		\$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, 15<sup>th</sup> 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.



**Help Wanted**

The Association is in desperate need for a new Editor of the Dragon. We are seeking any member with computer based word processing skills.

A Dragon template in MSWord is available for continued use. A great volume of material for the Dragon is received from members, elected, and appointed officers. A time commitment from the Editor is required in order to receive raw content, edit, and prepare the Dragon. Routinely the Dragon is converted to pdf and sent to the printer via email. An additional time commitment is required to receive the Dragon back from the printer, prepare each copy, address each copy, and drop the Dragons at a bulk mail facility. All expenses are paid by the Association.

The alternative of hiring a newsletter publisher is prohibitively expensive.

Newsletter experience is nice to have, but not necessary. We want to continue to publish the Dragon in the future. To do this we need a new Editor. Anyone interested in the position contact Mike Horn or any Association officers at the phone numbers or email addresses on page 2.

3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion Commander and CSM thanking Henry Burke and John Burke for the Troop Support items presented at Fort Stewart.

**Websites Worth A Peek**

<http://www.frnews.com/1-15/1-15web.htm> The Family Readiness Group website for the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion. It includes links to letters from the company commanders in Iraq. This site provides great company level updates from Iraq.

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

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