



THE BRIDGE BUILDER

Official Publication of the 547th Engineer Battalion (Combat) Association

VOL 14, NO 4

NOV 27, 2014

WINTER EDITION! 2014 Reunion Results!

PRESIDENT's Message

Fellow "Bridge Builders":

Roger L. Gorres

I am happy to report that the first ever joint reunion was a SUCCESS! Many thanks to Reunion planers Joe Papapietro (11th Engineer Battalion Association), and to Ed & Sherri Whitfield (547th Engineer Battalion Association). The highlight of the 4 day reunion was the ceremony conducted at the Medal of Honor Museum, on the U.S.S. Yorktown. It was for Major General Harry Greene, who was a 547th C Company Commander in 1985 (He was killed in Afghanistan on 5 August, 2014). It also was for SFC Paul Ray Smith, a member of the 11th Engineer Battalion, who was the first soldier to receive a Medal of Honor (Posthumously) for the war in Iraq. I highly recommend those of you whom did not come, to email Sharron Williams (srwms@earthlink.net) and purchase a DVD on this reunion. Recently deceased (Clarence Burris Jr and George McDonald), were also recognized; bringing the total of 91 on our associations deceased honor roll.

The following association members were presented a 547th Engineer Battalion Coin at the annual Business meeting (*those who were not present, will receive their coin through the mail); in recognition of their contribution:

1. Chuck Jones: for his many years of serving as President "Emeritus" of the Association.
2. Pat McDowell: for his years as Historian and as coordinator for the 2013 reunion.
3. Patricia McDowell: for her efforts as the "Reach-Out Committee" chairperson.
4. Dan Allen: for his many years as Chaplain.
5. Bill Davis*: for his advice and assistance to me these past 3 years and as Editor of our "Newsletter".
6. Ken Derringer: for his service as Secretary to the Association these many years.
7. John Hetzel: for his service as Treasurer and modernization of the finance system.

8. George McDonald* (deceased): for his many years as our auctioneer "One More Dollar".
9. Anita McDonald*: for her many years of service as the Treasurer.
10. Dave Tarbox: for his service as the last Battalion Commander of the unit.
11. Kay Schomer: for her many years as our Secretary and hostess for 2 reunions.
12. Gordon Schomer (deceased): for his service as Regional Director and host for 2 reunions.
13. William Bishop: One of the original members of the 547th Engineer Battalion.
14. Caesar White: One of the original members of the 547th Engineer Battalion.
15. James Williams: One of the original members of the 547th Engineer Battalion.
16. Spenser Tunstall: One of the original members of the 547th Engineer Battalion.
17. Randall Ripley: for his effort in getting the associations web site developed and to be implemented.
18. Ed Whitfield: for being this year's coordinator for the association and accepting the position of our Chaplain.
19. Myron Harrington (COL Ret'd USMC): Guest Speaker at the MOH ceremony.
20. The "Piper" at the MOH ceremony.
21. LTC Hawthorne: 11th Engineer Battalion Commander: Guest speaker at the Banquet.
22. CSM Machado: 11th Engineer Battalion Command Sergeant Major.

Essayons!

roger.gorres@yahoo.com

1VP Report:

Vern Lowrey

nvlowrey@fidnet.com

2VP Report Randall Ripely

As the 2nd VP of the 547th Engineer Battalion Association, my main focus is on recruiting. Like Associations around the country we are struggling to get new members and attendee's to the reunion. Association membership in all types of groups are down 50% or more as technology is transitioning the way people socialize from a face-to-face to more electronic communication and interaction.

Recruiting is also made more difficult for an association like ours due to the fact we have a very limited group of people who are eligible for membership, have no active duty unit to partner with and we can't offer 10% discounts like Triple A.

All of the social media sites are great for facilitating information on the Association reunions and getting guys in touch with each other but they have for the most part been ineffective in getting new members to join the association.

I have seen the comment many times where someone will say, "I'll start attending when others from my unit start attending". The only response I have for this is, "How about you be the one that contacts your buddies and convinces them to attend with you".

In 2011, myself and three others from Alpha Company 80-84 who had been in touch on the Facebook site of the same name decided to attend the 2011 reunion in Branson, MO.

I can definitely tell you that no social media interaction could match the face-to-face meeting of that weekend. I have gone to every reunion since then and we have 4 from our era attending each year. So, don't wait around for others to get the band back together. Make it your mission in 2015 to get someone new to join the Association and even better yet, attend the reunion in Boston.

Sincerely,

Randal
randal.ripley@yahoo.com

Treasurer's Report:
John Hetzel
hetzeljohn@yahoo.com

Secretary's Report Ken Derringer

Say, Folks, it was a genuine pleasure for me to be back among you in Carolina this year. You likely remember I had been a widower for several years and remarried just last year. Nola and I are both old "retreads" and rejoice that our Lord joined us together. Charleston is the first year for her to meet all you Bridge Builders and your Ladies. She says she

thoroughly enjoyed your company and was taken by the strong comradeship among us. I won't bother you with administrative trivia, but I still need to locate some "lost" Bridge Builders. Please help find some of our "missing" troopers and encourage them to "re-up". Also - does **ANYONE** know how I might reach Dan and Ursula Allen? Nola and I look forward to seeing you next year in New Hampshire! Meanwhile, "God's richest blessings on ALL of you!"

Ken Derringer, Secretary
kcderringer@tctwest.net

Reach Out Report Pat and Patricia McDowell

Greetings everyone,

Information from the 547th EN BN Assoc. Reach Out Committee:

Calvin Taylor: Passed away on 11 October 2014 in Washington, DC. Internment will be in Arlington National Cemetery in a private ceremony at a later date. Master Sergeant (Retired) Taylor was in a nursing home and discharged to his home for 3 years. While at home he had a caretaker. As his condition worsened, Calvin was hospitalized at the Veterans Administration Hospital. MSG Taylor served in the 1349 Engr. Rgt, the 559th En Bn and in the 547th En Bn from Sept. 1946 until Sept 1952. He was an original Bridge Builder.

Clarence Burris: Clarence Burris passed away in February 2014. We contacted Mrs. Burris recently to find out how they were doing. During the conversation we found out that Clarence's daughter had passed away on 3 September 2014.

Richard Palmer: Richard passed away on 12 November 2013. We called his wife Linda to find out how she is doing OK and is keeping busy.

Ernest Keahey: Called Ernest's daughter. Ernest passed away 15 May 2014. Bianca, his daughter is looking out for her mother who fell recently and fractured and dislocated her shoulder.

Richard Carter: He is doing OK. Thanked us for the call.

Carl Bragg: Spoke to his wife. He is no longer on oxygen. She asked us to keep in touch. Let us continue to remember these Bridge Builders in our thoughts and our prayers

Patricia McDowell
1-717-462-4371
cmcdowell@aol.com

Editor's note: My cousin, Anthony Scarich, was a Combat Engineer during WWII. Anthony passed recently at the age of 97. He was stationed in New Hebrides and in the Fijis. Looking at the photo

display I noticed The attached photo: SGT Tony Paul Scarich, B Co, 547th Engr Batt (C) APO 932, San Francisco, California. This was 1945. I think this was a PCS just as the War ended. 23 years later in 1968 I was a SGT in B Co, 547th Engr Bn (C), but in Darmstadt, Germany. What a coincidence!



Notes for 2015

Reunion Planner Randal Ripley

The 2014 association reunion in Charleston, SC has come and gone but the planning for the 2015 Reunion in Manchester, NH is in full swing.

My wife Pilar and I are looking forward to hosting the 2015 reunion and have a full slate of activities on the agenda for this year's attendee's. The Theme for this year's reunion is "The Freedom Trail".

Where we will be staying has a full restaurant and bar but just in case you're up for something else, the Mall of NH and many other restaurants are just 1.5 miles away.

We will be spending the first activity day of the reunion in Boston, MA, a 45 minute ride from Manchester down interstate 93, the birthplace of freedom.

After a 1 hour trolley ride around Boston, attendee's will have the opportunity to walk into history on the 2.5 mile Freedom Trail, a red lined route that leads you to 16 historically significant sites — each one an authentic treasure.

If you want to limit your walking each attendee will have an on/off pass for the trolley that will allow you to get off and on near the attractions you want to see. This will also provide you the ability to see many other attractions in Boston that have nothing to do with the Freedom Trail theme.

Maybe you would rather hang out at Faneuil Hall and watch the amazing acrobatic and gymnastic performers or enjoy shopping at Boston's oldest market place, Quincy Market.

The second day activity will be at Minute Man National Park in Concord, MA where the events of April 19th, 1775 would forever change history.

Before the day was over 140 colonist and 226 British

soldiers were dead and the war for independence was on.

We will visit the Northbridge and its visitor's center, Hartwell Tavern, Minuteman Welcome Center and if time permits, Lexington Center

We will be providing a lot of information in upcoming editions of the newsletter and are putting together a "pdf format" booklet that will provide all the reunion information.

We hope to see many of you at the 2015 reunion.

Randal "Rip" Ripley



547th Association website: The website has already been bought and needs to be populated. Glenn Chase, the lead on the project, myself (Randal Ripley) and Dave Tarbox have access right now until the initial content is added.

Dave Tarbox: For anyone who is interested, here is a link to a recent tour of Lincoln Village that the mayor of Darmstadt gave to interested investors. Dave "Rundgang durch die Lincoln-Siedlung in Darmstadt" Video:

Darmstadt, 10.11.2014: Die Lincoln-Siedlung in Darmstadt wird zum neuen Wohngebiet. Bei einem Rundgang konnten Bürger Darmstadts "neuen Süden" kennen lernen.

<http://www.echo-online.de/videos/?bcpid=35635772001&bckey=AQ~.AAAAfnpPqE~,CkiPcvIauWZLN7XVkozlj7Xuu7LlLZ3&bclid=0&bctid=3886095353001>

547th Engineer Battalion (Combat) Association

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Having served honorably with the 547th Engineer Battalion (Combat), or attached units (1328th Engineers, 552nd Engineers), I hereby make application for membership in the 547th Engineer Battalion (Combat) Association. Dues are **\$20.00 per year** with the membership period from 01 August of the current year through 31 July of the following year. Membership in the 547th Association is also open to family members, and any individual who expresses a desire or interest in promoting the objectives of the Association.

Name _____ Telephone #1 (____)_____

Street _____ Telephone #2 (____)_____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

e-mail #1: _____ e-mail #2: _____

Company served: _____ Assignment: _____

Years served: (from) _____ (to) _____

Locations served _____

=====
Mail to: Association Treasurer: **John C Hetzel, 8214 W Planada Ln, Peoria, AZ 85383**

Note: You are encouraged to reproduce this form and send it to other 547th soldiers.

Ken Derringer
PO Box 17
Hyattville, WY 82428-0017

TO: