

THE DAILY RUNNER

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR THE GREATEST GENERATIONS FOUNDATION



Above: WWII Veterans return to Omaha Beach.

D-Day Paratroopers Return to Normandy for First Time in 63 Years, Thanks to T.G.G.F.

by T.G.G.F. Staff Writer

DENVER, COLORADO - A group of American World War II veterans recently made a return visit to the shores of Normandy, France where they landed on D-Day in 1944. This time no one was shooting at them but that didn't stop the memories or emotions from attacking like a platoon of marauding German panzers.

Three combat veterans of the Normandy Campaign returned to France as guests of the Denver based "The Greatest Generations Foundation," 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, which is committed to offering our country's combat veterans the opportunity to revisit their battlefields free of charge. For all involved it was an educational, insightful and highly emotional journey.

Returning to those historic battlefields for the first time since D-Day 1944 was Littleton resident Corporal Richard Rohleder who served with the 320th Glider Field Artillery Battalion of the famed 82nd Airborne Division. Corporal Rohleder and his fellow "Glider Rider" artillerymen soared into the fight in the early morning hours of June 6 via Waco and Horsa gliders at the same time soldiers from the parachute infantry regiments jumped into Normandy to begin breaking the Nazi stranglehold on occupied Europe. "The visibility was poor and low ceiling made air navigation extremely difficult," said 83-year-old Rohleder as he pointed to one of the many Norman farm fields where he and his fellow soldiers touched down to begin the mission of supporting the assaulting infantry with fire from their 105mm howitzers. "The gliders were badly scattered for miles along the drop zone," he continued. By 0930 the following day, we only had two howitzers in action - one firing north and one firing south." That situation didn't last long as more gliders and air-dropped packages of weapons and ammunition continued to arrive in Normandy. "By 8 June 1944," Rohleder remembered, "we had eight howitzers ... **continued on page 2...**

War Memorial Holds Special Meaning for Women Veterans

by Shawn Patrick

DENVER, COLORADO - A group of veterans from Colorado made the journey to Washington D.C. to see the World War II monument. It's a site Marge Alexander thought she'd never see at the age of 85.

"The good memories that I'm sure we all had, and I feel bad about the people that didn't come back," she said. Like her cousin who died in the Battle of the Bulge.

Alexander also lost many friends in the war, so she knew she wanted to serve somehow.

She signed up with the women's reserve unit for the U.S. Marine Corps. Alexander spent several years driving trucks and jeeps, transporting troops and equipment at the Marine Corps Air Depot in Miramar, Calif. from 1943 to 1945.

"We did whatever ...**continued on page 6...**

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... continued from page 1... firing in support of a coordinated offensive action undertaken by the 325th Glider Infantry Regiment.” Rohleder visited the approximate area where his battery was emplaced for that support mission during a stop near Ste Mere Eglise, the Norman community that boasts of being the first French town liberated by the allies on D-Day 1944. By the time the All-American Division was pulled back to England to rest and prepare for further airborne offensives it had experienced thirty-three continuous days of bloody combat, suffering 5,245 troopers killed, wounded, or missing. The division’s post-battle report, authored by Major General Matthew B. Ridgway who commanded the unit in Normandy, sited the extended period of straight action “without relief, without replacements. Every mission accomplished. No ground lost.”



Left: Capt Walker Remembers Major Howie; Right: Capt Malvin Walker at the U.S. Cemetery on Omaha Beach.

Also returning to the battlefield as an honored guest of The Greatest Generations Foundation was Private First Class Raymond Nagell, another artilleryman who served with the Screaming Eagles of the 101st Airborne Division, the other American airborne unit that took part in the massive allied invasion in 1944. Nagell landed in France with the 321st Glider Field Artillery Battalion but he did not arrive by air. “I landed on Utah Beach on D-Day aboard the Liberty ship John S. Mosby, but we were unable to engage in any action for several days” said Nagell as he stood on a stretch of sand near where his unit came ashore in 1944. A lack of sufficient gliders to lift his entire unit into the fighting caused some of the artillerymen to be sent into Normandy across the bloody beaches. “They divided the battalion into two groups,” he recalled. One element landed by glider, the other took ship and crossed the English Channel hoping to catch up with their airborne counterparts as soon as possible. “A second group was aboard the Susan B. Anthony which struck a mine and sank off the coast of Omaha Beach.” Nagell and his fellow artillery crewmen managed to get ashore without loss of life but they had to wait for three days before they were reunited with their weapons and vehicles.

During the time they were waiting for their weapons, Nagell and other glider artillerymen from his stranded outfit got into the fighting as forward observers for other batteries and ships offshore firing in support of the paratroops that had landed in pre-dawn darkness on D-Day. One of the outfits Nagell most often supported was the 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment made familiar by the HBO TV series “Band of Brothers.” By June 9, Nagell and his fellow soldiers were in action on their own and firing their 105mm howitzers in support of a drive by the 327th Glider Infantry Regiment to cross the hotly-contested Douve River. Nagell continued to fight for 29 days in Normandy, then went on to serve more than two months in combat in Holland. He survived ten rugged days in Bastogne during the Battle of the Bulge before being evacuated with severe frostbite. A highlight of the battlefield visit for all the veterans who returned with guides and sponsors from The Greatest Generations Foundation was a visit to the La Fiere Bridge and causeway near Ste Mere Eglise where a major American motion picture was in preparation. Captain Dale Dye USMC (Ret), a renowned Hollywood military advisor and film-maker, gave the visiting veterans a tour of the area where the film will be shot this fall. “These distinguished gentlemen and others like them are one of the primary reasons we’re doing this film,” said Dye, who will make his feature film directing debut with “No Better Place to Die,” the story of the 82nd Airborne’s epic fight for the crucial crossing of the Merderet River at La Fiere.



Left: Ray Nagell returns to Utah Beach; Right: Soldiers from the Glider Regiment on Utah Beach.

Accompanying the visitors at La Fiere was Dye’s wife, Dr. Julia D. Dye PhD, who serves with The Greatest Generations Foundation as a volunteer guide and historian. “We wanted the returning veterans to know that they will never be forgotten. That’s the reason my husband is so passionate about making this film. We wanted them to understand that this will be a story about combat veterans told by combat veterans who understand things like service and self-sacrifice.” As usual on these return visits, the group was led and cared for by Timothy Davis, President and Founder of The Greatest Generations Foundation. “It just an honor to be in their presence,” said Davis who has escorted hundreds of returning veterans free of cost to battlefields in both Europe and the Pacific. “It’s important for our generation to understand what these men have lived through and what it means

to the entire world that we live in today. It’s also a great opportunity to document and preserve their stories, told in their own words while they stand on the battlefield where they fought, and remember the way it was. It’s our legacy of freedom and we can’t afford to lose that.”

Educational Programs



Photo of one of the museum's most popular collections.

WORLD WAR II TRAVELING MUSEUM - As of August 2008, construction has been completed on the National World War II Traveling Museum. The creation of the WWII museum is a major educational initiative for the foundation. The museum will display authentic WWII-era uniforms, weaponry, artifacts, and photos.

These items serve as tangible compliments that help illustrate personal narratives provided by WWII Veterans directly for students in the school system across the country. We invite your participation. Financial gifts and donation of artifacts, documents, photographs or materials related to the history of World War II will help us to expand our efforts.

This will help us educate current and future generations about this important part of our history. For more information on arranging the traveling museum to visit your school or event, please contact T.G.G.F.

VETERANS PRESERVATION - To continue to enhance the knowledge of students, and in conjunction with the Library of Congress and Kroenke Sports Enterprises, T.G.G.F. launched a new program documenting the stories of American and Canadian WWII Veterans entitled "The Veterans Preservation Project." Many WWII Veterans pass away every day in North America, going to their graves without having told of their wartime experiences. It is time to provide each veteran the chance to share with us his or her war time story. For more information on participating in the Veterans Preservation program, please contact Reed Sundine at T.G.G.F.



French school children with American & Canadian veterans.



Now looking for people to tell their story.

NATIONAL TV SHOW - T.G.G.F. continues to build upon its established educational platform by launching a national TV show entitled "In the Heart of Battle." Hosted by Capt. Dale Dye This 30 minute 3D/Animated documentary television program provides a forum for our veterans to recount their experiences in a specific battle.

"In The Heart of Battle" works to preserve personal histories that have never been told, and is a large component for today's generation to learn, hear and connect with the WWII generation. The first series of shows will include the following battles: Guadalcanal, Palau, Iwo Jima, Okinawa, Anzio, Normandy (Omaha), Battle of the Bulge and Alsace-Lorraine. First series is due for completion for Veterans Day 2008.

UPCOMING EDUCATIONAL DOCUMENTARIES - AT ALL COST (Released Spring 2008.) At All Cost is a true story on the personal experiences of 24 men who, as young teenagers, were engaged in one of the most monumental events in human history; to Liberate Europe. This emotional journey back to the battlefields reminds us all of the heartbreaking toll war takes on human lives and of the impact of the victory they would win.



Capt Dye USMC (ret) directs in the upcoming series with T.G.G.F.

Today, the men who were these teenagers have been changed by the recognition they've received and the tribute that's been paid to them. As humble today as they were in their youth, this film and the experience in making it has served to be a life changing experience. Executive Produced by Jeffrey Rosenthal, Dennis Gilbert, Robert Shipp and Barry Segal, Co-Directed by Timothy Davis and Robert Coffin. At All Cost was filmed in England, France, Belgium, Luxemburg, Germany and the United States.



Fellow Veterans participate in a Washington D.C. tour.

JOURNEY ONE TOURS - In addition to our WWII battlefield tours, T.G.G.F. provides veterans this opportunity to participate in our Journey One Tours to Washington D.C. Completed 60 years after the war ended, the WWII Memorial honors the 16 million men and women who served. Since its completion, only a small proportion of WWII veterans have been able to visit this memorial, until now.

We believe these journeys allow Veterans who find traveling alone difficult due to health concerns or other restrictions, to experience the gratitude of today's generation. In addition, our Journey One trips allow Veterans to experience the memorial together, giving them an opportunity to share stories, and connect with one another. This is a National program for all veterans. For more information on the Journey One tours, please contact T.G.G.F.

US WWII Veterans in Australia for ANZAC Day

by T.G.G.F. Staff Writer



The Greatest Generations Foundation was proud to take a group of World War II veterans on a spring journey to Australia as part of that country's ANZAC (Australian New Zealand Air Corps) Day. The trip sponsored in part by Qantas Airlines and the Grand Hyatt Melbourne and donors like you. Clayton Nattier, Ed Tipper, Bill Brunger, 'Lucky' McGinty, Mitch Mischler and Bob Ball are flew down under to represent their generation and their country. Every man was treated with the upmost respect and many were consistently asked for their autographs.



Listeners in Colorado and on the internet were able to hear to live coverage of the ANZAC Day trip thanks to Newsradio 850 KOA in Denver and their partners with the Australian Broadcasting Company. There were opportunities for the veterans to talk with children - one of the stops came at St. Bernard's College, a junior and senior high school all-boy's campus. The kids were dressed in uniforms and sat silently as the vets told their stories of survival and friendship during their years in the service.



Top: Two old warriors swap tales; Middle: Crowd thanks the Veterans; Bottom: Even the young ones wanted to connect with our veterans.

Questions ranged from what sorts of weapons were used, to how long two of the vets were in POW camps. These boys and their teachers were engaged and fascinated by the WWII stories.



Top: ANZAC Day 2008; Bottom Left: This whole trip, the central theme seemed to be about making connections; Right: ANZAC Day 2008.

Following stops in three different classrooms, the vets headed to visit the Royal Melbourne Hospital, celebrating its 160th anniversary this year. The hospital administration put on quite the event, with old photos showing how the US Army took over in 1942 as the Army hospital of the South Pacific.

Even today, there seems to be a rich and storied tradition in how the "Yanks" came into Melbourne and were so well-respected and liked. At times during the war, as many as 700 patients were being admitted daily (not just war wounded, but soldiers and marines suffering from malaria and other tropical diseases.)

ANZAC Day itself was incredible for the Colorado vets. The day started with a sunrise memorial service at the Shrine near downtown Melbourne. There, an eternal flame much like President Kennedy's at Arlington, burns consistently. It was moving and attended by at least 25,000 people. Several hours later, in beautiful sunny Autumn skies, the annual ANZAC Day parade stepped-off with 15,000 people in the parade alone.

Tens of thousands of others lined about a three mile route, waving flags, clapping and cheering the bands and most importantly, the vets. The Coloradans marched behind signs which read 'ALLIES' and 'USA.' The applause, the 'Go Yanks!' and 'Thanks!' were consistent along the route. TGGF vets, most in their mid to late 80s, marched under the direction of Capt. Dale Dye, USMC. You know him from Band of Brothers, Saving Private Ryan and Platoon.

After the parade the vets were whisked in Aussie military vehicles to the MCG, the cricket and AFL stadium which seats about 110,000 people. Guests of the Essendon Football Club, one of our vets, Clayton Nattier, had the chance to present a game ball before the start of the game. The incredible week wrapped-up for the vets with the most amazing dinner with Australia's version of Martha Stuart. Maureen and Peter McKeon and their son James hosted our group, after meeting us on the flight down to Melbourne.

They have a wonderful, historic home that hosted the vets and a meal they'll never forget. Before the last night, a few vets wandered the streets of Melbourne, taking in the scenery, street shows, graffiti alleyways (a huge draw for art lovers) and the afternoon wrapped outside Flinder's Street station, where GI's would come into Melbourne 65 years ...continued on page 5...



Photo: The veterans share their WWII experiences with the children of Toorak Primary School and St Barnerds College in Melbourne Australia.

...continued from page 4... ago with pockets full of money while on leave. They'd immediately head to the first pub they'd see, Young & Jackson's, across the street. We raised a few pints of Crown Lager, Mtn. Goat and Victoria Bitters to our boys and the boys of the past. As one of our vets said during this trip: "It's about the best time of my life, I reckon."

Veterans Return to Battle Sites of World War II

by T.G.G.F. Staff Writer

May 2008, A group of World War II veterans made their final journey back to England for ten days, revisiting their original bomb base thanks to Denver based The Greatest Generations Foundation.

"I get very emotional talking about it, not sure how I am going to feel reliving that experience" said 1st Lt. Clayton Nattier, pilot of a B-17 with the 306th Bomb Group. "It was September 13th, 1944. I was on a mission to bomb Marseburg, Germany when heavy flack from the German 88's damaged the wing of my B-17 over Nazi Germany," said Nattier. "I called for the crew to bail out, only three made it out; seven of my men were lost on that mission" said Nattier recalling that fateful day. With third-degree burns to his face, arms and neck, the German Army was waiting below.

"I was surprised by the treatment they provided," said Nattier. A German Medic then treated Nattier for his wounds, and was transferred to a Prisoner of War camp in northwest Germany known as Stalag 1. Also returning back to Europe is POW veteran 1st Lt. Robert Ball.

Ball flew 9.5 missions as a bombardier with the 313th Squadron with the 91st Bomb Group until August 12th, 1943 over Gelsenkirchen Germany; two German Messerschmitt 109 fighters came in from the south, tearing holes into the fuselage, forcing the crew to bail out. Ball was taken prisoner and then transferred to Stalag III, famously known for the 1963 Hollywood film, "The Great Escape."

"I spent 21 months in the camp working continually on escape efforts as part of a tunnel crew constructing wooden horse for the big escape, some of which failed," said Ball. When Ball wasn't working on tunnels, he was serving as POW Special Aid General A.W Vanaman.

Also returning are aviators 1st LT Robert Evans 313th Troop Carrier, 1st LT Art Myers (POW) from the 446th Bomb Group and Staff Sergeant Donald Eng from the 457th Bomb Group.

"I was on my 25 and final mission when we were shot down over Nazi-Germany" recalls Myers. "We were rounded up and marched to Stalag 1 in North Eastern Germany. For 14 months I experienced hell" said 85 year old Myers.



Top left: Robert Ball locating his friend of the Wall of Missing in Cambridge England; Bottom left: Art Myers, Robert Ball and Clayton Nattier stand at the 91st Memorial in Bassingbourne England; Top right: Art Myers 446th BG walks the old runway of Bungay England; Bottom right: 91st Control Tower in Bassingbourn, as it stands today.

...continued from page 1... we could do to help the war effort,” said Alexander.

Wilma Easton spent most of her time around a teletype machine with the Women’s Army Corps, teaching young soldiers to type.

It was a challenge.

“If they were going to be drafted, they wanted to carry a gun and shoot. They did not want to learn to type, heavens no, that was a woman’s job,” said Easton while laughing.

Easton soon sailed for Italy on her 24th birthday on Feb. 18, 1945 where she took over as a clerk general at the U.S. message center.

She witnessed first-hand the historic turning point of VE day, the allied victory in Europe.

“Rumors were flying and the excitement was so intense. I thought, ‘I better get back to the barracks and see what’s going on.’

Just when I went out, the truck went by with some soldiers who yelled at me, ‘Get off your horse. The war is over,’” said Easton.

That night, the wine flowed and celebration followed and a young man asked her hand in marriage.

The marriage would last 57 years until her husband’s death six years ago. Easton and Alexander will join other women on their trip to the nation’s capitol.



Photos: WWII Veterans visiting the memorials in Washington D.C.

Do You Know Your History?

Each coming newsletter will feature profiles of our living heroes who have become a part of our history. These men and women devoted a great deal for our freedoms and their sacrifices should never be forgotten. These veterans of American wars, including World War II, Korea, Vietnam and Iraq/Afghanistan, hold a special place in our hearts and we must never forget the sacrifices that they have made for us.

They are truly the Greatest of our Generations...

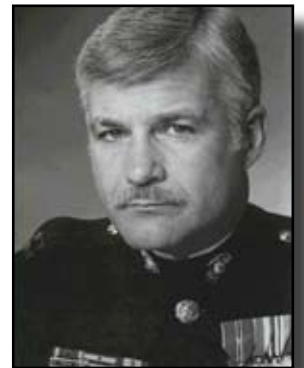
This edition features Veterans Capt Reed Sundine and Capt Dale Dye.

VIET NAM WAR



VETERANS NAME -
Capt Reed Sundine
PLACE OF BIRTH -
Denver, Colorado
BRANCH OF SERVICE -
United States Air Force
YEARS IN MILITARY SERVICE -
1966-1972
SPECIALTIES - Aircraft Commander
MILITARY BATTLES -
Viet Nam
MEDALS/HONORS RECEIVED -
Air Medal, Air Force Commendation,
Nation Defense, VS Medal

VIET NAM WAR



VETERANS NAME -
Capt Dale Dye
PLACE OF BIRTH -
Cape Girardeau, Missouri
BRANCH OF SERVICE -
United States Marine Corps Viet Nam
YEARS IN MILITARY SERVICE -
1964 to 1983
SPECIALTIES -
Marine Correspondent
MILITARY BATTLES -
Surviving 31 major combat operations
MEDALS/HONORS RECEIVED -
Three (3) Purple Hearts, Bronze Star

Veterans Honored with Surprise Medals on Anniversary of VE Day

by Shawn Patrick

DENVER - A group of World War II veterans from around Denver remembered the 63rd anniversary of VE Day Thursday. It is the day when Germany surrendered to allied forces in Europe. VE stands for "Victory in Europe."

In the back room at Prime 121 Steakhouse, 20 veterans reunited, side by side again, sharing a time and place only they can understand. Staff Sgt. Leonard McKinney remembers hearing of the victory announcement while flying a B-17 stateside, training other pilots to do the same.

Later that night, McKinney was in Chicago while celebrations broke out in the streets. "All the women kissed me and hugged me. Young ladies, old ladies," said McKinney. Cpl. Don Whipple was still fighting in the Pacific when he heard the exciting news.

"It was a real shot in the arm because you kept thinking, 'Soon we'll get some of those guys over here to help us finish this off,'" said Whipple.

Many knew VE Day was a turning point in the war, but the outcome was still uncertain. "We were also concerned, being a younger outfit, we were probably going to end up going to Japan," said George Bullene, another veteran.

Each man and woman in the room had a story, but few told it until recently. "I didn't until just the last two or three years," said Bullene. Now, decades separated from a time that forced them to grow up fast, they're more willing to share what they saw and learned. "But I know why they never talked about it, because people just wouldn't understand. You can't express what war is like," said Whipple.

Whipple and McKinney were surprised at a luncheon by receiving several war medals, including a Purple Heart for Whipple, more than six decades after the war.

The presentation was made possible by a Denver-based group, the Greatest Generations Foundation.



Photos: Leonard McKinney with his long awaited war medals from Mitch Mischler.

VETERANS CALL-UP

The Greatest Generations Foundation recognizes that many countries and different cultures banded together to champion freedom and advance human rights during times of world conflict.



Accordingly, T.G.G.F. actively seeks to integrate multiple cultures when arranging return trips to battlefields in foreign lands. If you are interested in joining The Greatest Generations Foundation on a future trip back to battlefields of WWII, Korea or Vietnam, please contact T.G.G.F. for a Veterans Biographical Form or you can download one from our website at www.tggf.us

SUPPORT OUR MISSION AND DONATE TODAY

There are so many ways you can help T.G.G.F. Your contribution to T.G.G.F. is needed today. The veterans paved the way for us, now it is our turn to give them the means to revisit and remember. Whatever amount you choose to give, please know that your contribution will be used towards the goal of creating lasting change in Veteran's lives.



With your contribution to T.G.G.F., we will continue to support all the work we do for the Veterans. While the war may be over, it never really ended for the Veteran. The sad irony is, while we are enjoying the freedom they fought to give us, they are not fully free themselves. They carry with them the pain and sacrifices of war forever. Gifts can be sent to: **T.G.G.F. 3773 Cherry Creek North Drive, Suite 575, Denver, Colorado 80209.**

REMEMBERING THOSE WHO SERVED

Sydney Shuman, 92
U.S. Navy
Wendell James, 85
U.S. Army
Albert Hicks, 86
U.S. Marine Corps



LOUIS "DUKE" ZOTTI
U.S.
Army

Morris Breakstone
U.S. Army "E.S.S.F"
John M Spalding, 80
U.S. Army Air Corps
Clyde D. Tryon, 83
U.S. Army Air Corps
Lloyd Kraus, 93
U.S. Army

Dale Champion, 81
U.S. Coast Guard
Arthur G. Henry, 84
U.S. Marine Corps
Elmer Blasco, 87
U.S. Army

Gloria De Lage
WWII Veteran
Aurelius H. Piper Sr, 92
U.S. Army

Joseph Maffesoli, 84
U.S. Marine Corps
Jimmy Davis, 88
U.S. Army

Thomas Schaible Sr, 82
U.S. Marine Corps
C. John Ciekot, 88
U.S. Navy
Doris Hutcheson, 87
U.S. Army



ALEX BRONSBURG
Pearl Harbor
U.S. Navy

THANK YOU FOR THE MEMORIES, REST IN PEACE!

Special Thanks to Our Sponsors



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"Remember Those Who Served."